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CONTENTS

NOTES OF THE WEEK ...	1025	"Git!" (To the Mid-	
WAR NOTES ...	1027	dling Classes) ...	1035
LEADING ARTICLES:—		Poetry and Law ...	1035
Nearer to Peace ...	1028	The Influenza Epi-	
Parties and the Dis-		demie" ...	1036
solution ...	1028	The Open Window ...	1036
Opera after the War	1029	John Sterling ...	1036
Etchings by James		The Orgy of War ...	1037
McBey ...	1030	Paper Economy ...	1037
"Twelfth Night" at		REVIEWS:—	
the Court Theatre	1031	Delightful Essays ...	1037
VERSE:—		Empire and Liberty	1038
Ad Misericordiam ...	1032	Modern Poetry: By	
CORRESPONDENCE:—		W.B. ...	1039
Autocracy and De-		Our Library Table	1040
mocracy ...	1032	Latest Publications ...	1044
The Petroleum Mono-		FINANCE:—	
poly ...	1033	Motor Notes ...	1042
Club Management ...	1034	Insurance ...	1045
		The City ...	1046

NOTES OF THE WEEK.

The Prime Minister told the House of Commons that the Allied Powers, in consultation with their naval and military commanders, had unanimously agreed at Versailles on the terms of the armistice to be offered to Germany. Those terms have been communicated to President Wilson with the request that he will inform the German Government that if they want an armistice they must address themselves in the regular way to Marshal Foch, who is in supreme command of all the Allied armies. In the event of Marshal Foch receiving a request for an armistice from Germany he will summon to his side "a British naval representative." The terms of the armistice with Austria have been published in all the papers, and include evacuation of territory, internment or evacuation of all German soldiers, surrender of submarines and dreadnoughts, free use for transit of Austrian territorial waters and Austrian territory, as well as occupation of strategic points.

The news, as we go to press, is that the German Government has despatched delegates to the Headquarters of Marshal Foch on the Western Front to ask the terms on which he will grant an armistice. Mr. Lansing, on behalf of President Wilson, has communicated to the German Government, through the Swiss Minister for Foreign Affairs, that the Allied Powers accept the President's Fourteen Points as the bases of peace with the exception of Clause, or Point 2, relating to the "Freedom of the Seas." On that subject the Allied Powers reserve to themselves "complete freedom" at the Peace Conference. With regard to evacuation and restoration of territory, the Allied Powers understand that "compensation will be made by Germany for all damage done to the civilian population of the Allies, and to their property, by the aggression of Germany by land, by sea, and from the air." President Wilson accepts this interpretation.

Events sweep over Europe with such suddenness and rapidity that it is difficult to keep pace with them. General Diaz has signed an armistice with Austria-Hungary, and Allied troops now occupy

Trent and Trieste. After a reign of twenty-nine days, King Boris, of Bulgaria, has abdicated, and a Peasants' Council has assumed the Government. In Vienna the monster of Bolshevism has shown its ugly head, and Red Guards have begun to pillage. In Hungary a National Council with Count Karolyi, as President or Premier, has assembled; and in Bohemia various Tchecho-Slovak troops are disarming German-Austrian soldiers, and liberating prisoners. Eastern Galicia, in Polish Austria, has been invaded by Ruthenian or Ukrainian soldiers. In Kiel there is an outburst of Red Bolshevism. This is not surprising, as, with the exception of the Battle of Jutland the grand German fleet has been bottled up in harbour throughout the war, which is enough to ruin the discipline of any navy. It is not clear whether the fleet is coming out under the red or the white flag.

The Kaiser's letter to the Imperial Chancellor, giving an 'unctuous blessing to the New Constitution, is a curious compound of cleverness and stupidity, like all his speeches and writings. Wilhelm cleverly glides into his new position as if he had invented the transfer of "the fundamental rights of the Kaiser's person to the people." Calmly he writes, "the Kaiser's office is one of service to the people," as if he had not for twenty years told the army and the people that he was everything and they were nothing. The stupid part of the letter is that referring to "the wonderful achievements of this war," which he calls "a period which will stand in honour before the eyes of future generations." This is incredible folly, seeing that in an unmuzzled Press the German people will be forced to read the record of the planning of the war, the trials of the prison commandants, and the looting and murdering by their armies.

It will be long before we realise the extent of the damage to civilisation caused by the war. The greatest hurt to progress is the plunging back into the slough of Nationalism all the races of the Austro-Hungarian empire and the Balkan Kingdoms. Nationalism, or race-consciousness, is the most retarding of all the follies that excite the passions and blind the reason of men. The Tchechs of Austria and the Slavs of Hungary were just beginning to forget five years ago their race-fanaticism, and to turn their attention to economic development and political reform under such titles as Christian Socialism and Social Democracy, when the war came; and now with the break up of the Duality, the old fires are lighted, and the old hatreds are re-lumed. The state of the Balkans can only be dimly pictured by imagining that the Highland Scots and the Lowland Scots and the Welsh and the English and the Irish Celts were each to claim autonomy, and start a war on their neighbour.

Disraeli, in the mouth of Sidonia, said, "All is race." He was wrong: race is a rapidly diminishing factor in modern civilisation, where environment counts for far more, and race-consciousness is a barbarous survival of tribal mentality. The correspondence on the Irish Celts in these columns illustrated the angry nonsense which men will write and talk on a subject that matters not a pin, and about which they know little. But racial questions are now, unfortunately, the only politics of

Eastern Europe. The racial problems of Austria, of Hungary, the Balkan States, the Baltic provinces, the Turkish Empire, Russia, are such as to appal the most erudite professor and the most courageous statesman. Who can settle them?

Within what was the Austro-Hungarian Empire there are eight nationalities, viz.: Magyars, Tchechs (wholly contained within its frontiers), Germans, Italians, Roumans, Poles, Ruthenes, and Southern Slavs, or Slovenes. In the last six cases, the main body of the race lies beyond the Austrian frontier. For over six centuries the various branches of the Slavonic race have been kept down by three powers: the Turk, the Magyar, and the German. The famous Compromise or *Ausgleich* of 1867, was a bargain between the Germans of Austria (a strong minority), and the Magyars of Hungary (a bare majority), to keep under the Tchechs of Bohemia, and the non-Magyar races of Hungary, i.e., Roumans, Germans, Ruthenes, Croats, Serbs, etc. Now that the Empire is broken up, will the Magyars be able to keep this supremacy in Hungary? When we say Hungarian, we mean Magyar, for the great racing, shooting, Tokay-drinking aristocracy, so popular in England, is Magyar.

Not even the personal popularity of Mr. T. P. O'Connor could temper the cold contempt with which the House of Commons dismissed his Home Rule motion on Tuesday. Mr. Bonar Law said with perfect truth that "there never was a time in the history of the relations of the two countries when the claims of Ireland had less of a response in the United Kingdom than they had to-day." And Mr. O'Connor and Mr. Dillon know perfectly well why it is so. Mr. Dillon had, indeed, the effrontery to state that, "no section of the House had suffered so much as had the Nationalist Party in support of the Allies." If by "suffered" he means loss of votes, it is true. But the country is in no mood to measure "suffering" in terms of votes, with Germany still in the field, "the bleeding witness of her hatred by." Mr. Asquith is making another big blunder, in writing Irish Home Rule on his standard.

"The leading statesmen in a free country," wrote Bagehot, "settle the conversation of mankind. It is they who, by a great speech or two, determine what shall be said or what shall be written for long after." Mr. Asquith is the only leading statesman at large just now; the others are all busy discussing peace terms, or preparing for demobilisation. Mr. Asquith holds the field, and his speeches to the electors of Fife give us something to write and talk about. Mr. Asquith is strongly opposed to a general election, naturally enough, because he knows that a great many Liberals will feel obliged to vote or be voted for as Lloyd Georgians. He is, however, right in resolutely keeping together the Liberal Party. Party is organised opinion; and without parties the system of government becomes a scuffle for places, a mere welter of anarchy and corruption.

What makes Mr. Asquith's position peculiarly unhappy is that he probably sees, as clearly as anybody, that as a party the Liberals are bound to be defeated at the coming election. For what has he to offer the new electors? What is his battle-cry? Free Trade, and nothing else. Whatever the merits of Free Trade, and they are great, this is certainly not the hour in which to offer them to a new electorate swayed by the passions of the Great War. Free Trade requires for its appreciation a cool and scientific atmosphere. The vast majority of the new electors will be possessed by one idea only, how to punish the Germans, and one of the apparently easiest ways of doing that will be not to trade with them. Five years hence, perhaps, the economic boycott will be regarded with colder and more calculating eyes. In addition to this angry sentiment, which will not listen to economic arguments, Mr.

Asquith and his friends are labelled "old gang politicians" by the irreverent spirits of the day. We should have thought that a better game for Mr. Asquith to play would be support of the Government.

In truth the best of Mr. Asquith's arguments against a dissolution lead, in the alternative, to voting for Mr. Lloyd George. Let us keep the Coalition going, let us maintain "the united front," exclaims Mr. Asquith. Is not the best way of doing that to go to the polls as Government men? Of course, Mr. Asquith feels towards Mr. Lloyd George much as Mr. Goschen felt in 1885 towards Lord Salisbury. "I will not give Lord Salisbury a blank cheque," said Goschen in a metaphor which Salisbury found it hard to forgive. Mr. Asquith will not give Mr. Lloyd George "an indefinite lease of five years," during which, we agree, many things may be settled to Mr. Asquith's misliking. But then the Unionists might say the same thing. Mr. Asquith is a Free Trader; many Unionists are Protectionists; Mr. Lloyd George is neither one nor the other, or perhaps both. We can conceive no greater misfortune at the present crisis than the raising of the old battle between Free Trade and Protection. What we want is protection, not against foreign goods, but against foreign politics: a boycott, by all means, but a boycott against international Bolshevism.

The attempts of certain sections or individuals in the Unionist Party to extract pledges from the Prime Minister on the subject of fiscal policy are purely mischievous. Mr. Bonar Law has promised that Imperial Preference shall be adopted, though, as no one knows better than the Chancellor of the Exchequer, the only form of Imperial Preference which is practicable is a subsidy to shipping lines. At least, that is what we understand Imperial Preference "without taxation" to mean. Whether it will be wise to embark on a war of freights with the United States immediately after the war is another and a serious question, which had better not be raised at present. As we import from our colonies nothing but food and raw materials (wheat, meat, wool and metals), and as nobody proposes to tax these, imperial preference turns out to be an affair of subsidies and bounties. The same argument applies to national and "key" industries: they will be protected, not by tariffs, but by subsidies and bounties.

The collapse of autocracy is the most striking event, according to Mr. Asquith, of the historical drama now drawing to its final act. The Tsar of Russia has been murdered with his wife and family: the Emperor of Austria has fled from his capital to his ancestral castle in Hungary: Kings Constantine, Ferdinand, and Boris have abdicated; while the Kaiser Wilhelm is hovering on the verge of abdication. But surely the collapse of democracy is equally striking. In March, 1916, the People of Russia deposed our faithful Ally and their Emperor, and our Prime Minister and House of Commons were mean enough and silly enough to cable congratulations to the People of Russia on their crime. From that day to this, Russia, under the rule of unlimited democracy, has been an orgy of murder, robbery, and confusion, such as the world has never seen before.

Unlimited autocracy and unlimited democracy, like all extremes, are both bad; but judged by senseless crimes and destruction of property. Russian democracy has been worse than German autocracy. The brutalities with which the Germans have waged this war were at least practised upon their enemies; but the indescribable savagery of the Russians has been practised upon one another, upon themselves. It is the Russian People with a big P, the Soviet Councils of Russian soldiers and Russian workmen, who have murdered Russian officers, raped Russian ladies, robbed Russian banks, and burned Russian houses. And there is great danger that a similar outbreak of lawlessness and

bloodshed will sweep over Eastern Europe. We know what "a Peasants' Government" means, which, we see, has been set up in Bulgaria and a province of the Austro-Hungarian Empire. The only safe and stable form of government is the compromise between unlimited autocracy and unlimited democracy which is secured by constitutional monarchy. Yet there is a large section of the working class in this country who wish to destroy the monarchy and the House of Lords.

In the debate on the Petroleum Bill on Wednesday Lord Cowdray certainly made out a case against "indiscriminate boring," owing to wastage and loss of gas pressure. Government or central regulation of boring is necessary: but there is no reason, that we can see, why the boring operations should be confined to Messrs. Pearson. There are three or four other firms, or groups, notably the Anglo-Persian Company, in which the Government is the chief shareholder, who are justly aggrieved by exclusion from a very interesting and profitable business. Lord Cowdray persists in posing as an injured innocent and a philanthropic contractor. *Credat Judæus*: when a contractor begins to talk philanthropy to us, we count the spoons on the table. We cannot learn from the condensed reports in the papers whether the Lords approved the composition of the Petroleum Executive.

We have frequently condemned in strong terms Lord Beaverbrook's rapid promotion to a peerage and Cabinet Office. We are genuinely concerned to learn that his health has broken down, and we wish him a speedy recovery. His resignation of the Chancellorship of the Duchy of Lancaster, a post with only nominal duties, has thrown that dignified retreat open to Mr. Hayes Fisher, who retires from the Presidency of the Local Government Board with a peerage. Sir Auckland Geddes is moved from the National Service Ministry, which, we hope, is soon to be abolished, to the Local Government Board. Why Mr. Hayes Fisher has resigned we do not know: perhaps because he is a Conservative, a political breed that is rapidly being exterminated.

If Englishmen were not habitually indifferent to all politics but their own, they would be interested in the election of the House of Representatives and a third of the Senate, which is now taking place in the United States. To us, who are accustomed to thumping parliamentary majorities, it will seem absurd that the Democrats, President Wilson's party, have a majority of no more than 3 in a House of Representatives of 435 members, and a majority of 8 in a Senate of 96 members. The House of Representatives, commonly called Congress, is elected for two years, and the Senate for six, a third of the Senators retiring every second year. President Wilson has been twice elected by the Democratic vote; but the Republicans, led by Roosevelt, Lodge and Root, will probably get a majority in the Senate and Congress.

It is difficult for Britons to understand the working of a Government, which is not responsible to the Legislature, and has no seats in either House of Congress. Legally, it would not matter to President Wilson if the Republicans secured a majority in the Senate and the House of Representatives, as he and his Ministers are independent of both. But morally, a defeat of the President's party at the polls would impair his power, as it would look as if the American nation was not at his back. The position of a President with an adverse majority in the Legislature is not a comfortable one. If the Republicans secure a majority, particularly in the Senate, which must ratify the Treaty of Peace, there will probably be a modification of the Fourteen Points, for Messrs. Roosevelt and Lodge are not enamoured of a League of Nations, or freedom of the seas, or abolition of economic barriers.

WAR NOTES.

The Germans are being gradually forced back to the line of the Meuse. This general line is strengthened by the fortresses of Namur and Liège, which have probably been reconstructed, by Metz and Strasbourg, the Vosges and the Ardennes. If the Germans can maintain themselves on this line they will protect the Rhine cities from aught but air-craft and will economise men who will be available for offensive operations elsewhere. A short advance at the southern extremity of this line will, however, convey a very real threat of invasion to Bavaria. It is noticeable that the enemy Powers have, in each case, surrendered directly invasion becomes imminent. Bavaria, a prominent salient of the German Empire, is already threatened from the Tyrol, and will, in course of time, be threatened from the eastward.

So long as the Allied armies in France and Italy are separated by Bavaria, so long will there remain an off chance that a great victory over one or the other will incline the Entente Powers to offer more favourable terms of peace. If, however, the Bavarians surrender, accepting the usual terms of a free passage for the Allied armies through her territories, the line of the Meuse will be turned, the Germans will be forced to fall back behind the Rhine and the Main, the Allied armies will join hands in Bavaria, and the last chance of a great German victory will have disappeared. The surrender of Bavaria is thus the point of vital importance; and it is fortunate that Marshal Foch has now been placed in supreme control.

The capture of Trieste and the occupation of the Dardanelles deprives the Germans of an outlet in the Mediterranean, terminates the action of their submarines and therefore permits of the transfer of troops from Egypt and Palestine to Venice and Trieste. Possession of the Austro-Hungarian railway system will enable reinforcements to be brought from the Balkans; while the Rumanians, smarting under the punishment inflicted on them by the Germans, should not be backward in furnishing their quota. Very powerful forces can thus be concentrated in Austria for the invasion of Bavaria from the east and south-east. Signs are not wanting that the Bavarians intend to surrender without much delay. If, however, they elect to fight it out, our armies in Austria and the Tyrol must expect to be heavily counter-attacked before they reach the Bavarian frontier. The German-Austrians must then either side with the Allies or see their country devastated.

It is just possible, in view of the distance to be traversed, that Prussia may hold out, notwithstanding the surrender of Bavaria. In that case, the position of the Saxons will be extremely unenviable. For their country is situated on the direct line of advance from the Adriatic to Berlin. The Prussians will not hesitate to coerce the Saxons—supposing it to be within their power—for the mountain range between Saxony and Bohemia constitutes the only defensive line covering Berlin from the south. The command of the Black Sea, however, will give the Allies another doorway into Russia. They will thus be able to counteract German intrigue and to stabilise the situation in Russia. This is the last thing the Prussians desire; and they are extremely unlikely to jeopardise their future economic position in Russia by continuing a hopeless armed struggle.

Events move so rapidly that it is impossible for a weekly scribe to keep up with them. Late on Thursday it was reported that the First American Army had taken that part of the city of Sedan which lies on the west bank of the Meuse. The enemy's principal line of communication between the fortress of Metz and his troops in France and Belgium is thus in grave peril, if it remains at all tenable. Ghent has been evacuated and further rapid developments of our attack may be cut short by submission, especially since internal revolt is assuming alarming proportions in Germany.

NEARER TO PEACE.

It is well to keep clearly in our minds the steps towards peace, so that we may repress undue excitement, and avoid disappointment. According to telegraphic news on Thursday, the German Government has received President Wilson's Note, stating that the Allied Powers, with whom he is associated in the war, accept the Fourteen Points set forth in the Presidential message of January and commented on in the subsequent address of September, as the bases of peace, with the exception of the second point, relating to "Freedom of the Seas," as to which the Allies reserve "complete freedom" for themselves in subsequent discussion. Mr. Wilson also draws the attention of the German Government to the interpretation of evacuation and restoration of territory assumed by the Allies, and accepted by himself. Evacuation and restoration, which include the return of Alsace-Lorraine to France, mean compensation for all damage by land, by sea, and from the air. The German Government, on receipt of this Note by wireless, has despatched delegates, two Generals and two Admirals, to the Headquarters of Marshal Foch to ask for the terms on which the victorious Allies will grant an armistice. That is the regular military etiquette in war; but in truth the terms of the armistice have, in outline, already been proclaimed to the world. They will be such as to prevent the possibility of a renewal of hostilities, and to safeguard the execution of the peace terms which, as embodied in the Fourteen Points, have already been accepted by the German Government.

All this looks very like the end of the war, and the summoning of a peace conference to register results already decided. But there is a vast difference between general propositions and particular clauses in a treaty. Everyone has experienced, in the business of the Bar or the City, the annoyance of an adversary who accepts everything "in principle" and refuses everything in detail. It may be that when the German delegates carry back the terms of the armistice to Berlin they will be rejected as too humiliating or impossible of fulfilment. Or it may be that the present German Government will be upset by the withdrawal of the Socialists, or the National Liberals. We may be sure that a life-and-death struggle is going on between the Old Guard of Junkerdom and Militarism and the new Constitutionalists. Without a more accurate knowledge than is possessed by anybody in this country of the real military and domestic situation in Prussia and the other kingdoms of the German Empire, it is impossible to dogmatise or prophesy about the situation. Things move so rapidly nowadays in Europe that the night may bring forth anything. Certain terrible facts are plain, past dispute. Whether peace is signed to-day or to-morrow or before Christmas, millions of human beings in Russia, in Hungary, in Turkey, and throughout the Balkans, will die of starvation this winter. In Vienna, in Buda Pest, in Constantinople, in Moscow, and Petrograd, famine stalks abroad, and there is no possibility, with winter upon us, of averting the catastrophe. Every nation will have to do all it knows to feed its own subjects. Such is the handiwork of the German and Austrian Emperors—for let us be just, even in condemnation, to the Kaiser Wilhelm. The declaration of war upon Serbia was merely a consistent stroke in the long historical policy of Austria towards the Slavs. Francis Joseph was, of course, in his dotage: but his Foreign Minister made the bargain with the German Emperor; the Slavs were to be handed over to Austria, while France and Russia were to be dealt with by Germany. The guilt, therefore, must be divided between Germany and Austria; and we should not allow ourselves to be influenced in our judgment by the pleasant Austrian manners or the youth of the new Emperor.

It is pretty certain that if the armistice is accepted, the peace is as good as signed. Those who are interested in the details of the peace would do well to read the communication in *The Times* of Monday, under Lord Northcliffe's name. We should not be surprised if someone told us Mr. Lloyd George had revised the proof.

PARTIES AND THE DISSOLUTION.

MR. ASQUITH has entered his emphatic protest against plunging the nation into "the cauldron of domestic controversy" by a general election. We respect Mr. Asquith's effort to keep the Liberal Party together, believing, with him, that the maintenance of parties, with defined principles and authoritative leaders, is the only guarantee of honest and efficient government. We understand his reluctance at the present juncture to formulate a party programme, partly because on patriotic grounds he wishes to maintain "a united front," and partly because he sees that a large section of the Liberal Party—how large nobody knows—will be drawn from his standard to that of Mr. Lloyd George. His position is one of great difficulty. If, says Mr. Asquith, a new Parliament is to be elected, the Liberals cannot enter the contest blindfolded: they cannot give a five-years' lease of power to the present Government, a period during which the main work of reconstruction will be done, without knowing what they are about. Mr. Asquith's perplexity is shared, even if his protest is not endorsed, by all men who think about politics, and have their eyes open to what is passing in these islands and on the European continent. A General Election there will be, and in our opinion there ought to be a General Election. We think so, notwithstanding that no appeal was ever made to the constituencies in circumstances of greater confusion. How do Parties stand?

The second Parliament of King George V was elected in December, 1910, and met 31st January, 1911. It was composed of 272 Liberals, 84 Nationalists, 42 Labour Members, and 272 Unionists. Since that date bye-elections have increased the number of Unionists. This Parliament was elected by a constituency of some 8,000,000; the new constituency is calculated to be somewhere between 20 and 24,000,000 composed of men, women, and boys. Although the present Parliament can in no sense be taken as representative of the electors, it is the only basis of calculation we possess. On that basis the Unionist Party is the largest; and, not forgetting that England is still the predominant partner, we find that in 1911 there were in English constituencies 239 Unionists against 226 Liberals. The Unionist Party is the heritage bequeathed to the present generation by the combined sagacity of Lord Salisbury, the Duke of Devonshire, and Mr. Joseph Chamberlain. It is not to our purpose to inquire what use has been made of that heritage by the successors of those statesmen. For the present argument it is enough to record the fact that since 1914 the Unionist Party have supported with their whole strength, and with unquestioning loyalty, the Government, first in the hands of Mr. Asquith, then in the hands of Mr. Lloyd George. Many things have been done by government during these five years, in Ireland especially, which were repugnant to the Unionists. None the less the Unionists have supported with unbroken front, and numbers only diminished by those serving at the front, the Minister who was fighting the enemy. Had the dissolution taken place a few months ago, the country would have been asked to support the Minister who was winning the war, and there would have been no question of the way in which Unionists should vote, or the platform on which Unionist candidates should stand. To-day the war, though not finished, is won, and the appeal will be made by the Minister who has won the war. What is the duty of Unionist candidates and voters?

It is often said that there is not, and ought not to be, any such thing as gratitude in politics.

"Time hath, my lord, a wallet at his back,
Wherein he puts alms for oblivion,
A great-sized monster of ingratitude;
Those scraps are good deeds past: which are
devour'd
As fast as they are made, forgot as soon
As done."

The constituencies are not, as a rule, quite so cynical as Ulysses. But waiving the problem of political ethics whether a Minister should be supported for what he has done, we are clearly of opinion that all Unionists should support Mr. Lloyd George for what he may or will do in the next five years. The war is not over; the discussion of peace terms has not begun: the work of demobilisation and reconstruction has not been touched. For the handling of all these great and far-reaching purposes we can discern no fitter instrument than the present Government, led by Mr. Lloyd George, assisted by Mr. Bonar Law, Lord Milner and Lord Curzon. We are aware of the faults of the Prime Minister, and have not hesitated to criticise them with freedom. His subservience to a section of the Press, his intrigues with powerful individuals, and his imperious, not to say ungrateful, treatment of other individuals not so powerful, are all counts in an indictment that might easily be drawn against Mr. Lloyd George. But, after all, he is a leader, and he has a strong weapon in his hand. The one thing needful for the national safety at this hour is the maintenance of order and authority. There is no other living man who is so capable of guiding us through the perils of peace and reconstruction without an outbreak of Bolshevism as the present Prime Minister.

It is the clear duty of the Unionist Party, therefore, to drop for the present election some of their political and economic aims in order to rally round constituted authority in the hands of the present Coalition Government. How many of the Liberal Party and the Labour Party will do the same? That will to some extent depend on what arrangements can be made for uncontested elections. An uncontested seat is a powerful bribe, or, let us say, a strong inducement, to a politician. Wherever it can be arranged that a Coalition candidate shall not be opposed, there the candidate, be he Liberal or Labour, will probably find it consistent with his conscience to support Mr. Lloyd George. Many Liberals, who in normal times would follow Mr. Asquith, will, we know, stand and be accepted as Government candidates. Mr. Asquith should reckon with that fact before he unfurls a party standard which is bound to go down in the battle. There are, of course, two Labour Parties; the old Trade-Unionist Party, and the International Socialist Party. We suppose that the Trade-Unionist Party, whose leaders are Messrs. Barnes, Hodge, and Wardle, will support the Government. Mr. Arthur Henderson and the International Socialists will as certainly oppose it; and it will be interesting to see what this party of "Bolshevism without bloodshed," backed by the Fabians and the anarchists, will do at the polls. Of the Irish Nationalists it is not necessary to take count: they will probably be largely replaced by Sinn Feiners, and both will, it may be hoped, disappear from the British Parliament, or only remain in an insignificant fraction. Such is the settled disgust which the conduct of the majority of the Irish people has inspired in the British mind, that doubtless some form of Home Rule will be thrown to Ireland or a part of Ireland. The one desire of the average Briton is never to hear the name of Ireland again. Nor is it necessary to reckon with the numerous "crank" candidates who will be started. There will be feminist candidates, and pensioner candidates, a few crazy women, and a few disabled soldiers.

It is absolutely necessary, if there is to be an election before Christmas, that the Prime Minister and Mr. Bonar Law should issue election manifestoes without delay. Candidates are at present in the painful position of not knowing what to say. Messrs. Lloyd George and Bonar Law are, of course, up to the chin in work connected with the vast European questions suddenly raised in front of them. Nevertheless, they must find time to draw up the terms of the appeal to the country. The manifesto will necessarily be vague, and ought to be neither more nor less than an appeal to all patriotic citizens to maintain the same united front that has enabled us to bring the greatest of all wars to a victorious close.

OPERA AFTER THE WAR.

THE recent appointment of M. Albert Carré as co-director (with the Isola Frères) of the Paris Opéra-Comique has not escaped observation on this side of the Channel. It is a straw that indicates the direction in which the wind will blow. It means that, in the time now happily approaching, one of the great musical institutions of France—where opera is the concern of the State and under the direct control of the *Ministre des Beaux-Arts*—will be guided with unerring taste, vigour, and discretion. It means that in this as well as other matters connected with art our neighbours are looking ahead and have every intention of maintaining their place. Would that we were in a position to say and do as much!

As things stand at this moment, it would be no safer to speculate upon the course that opera will take in this country after the war is over than, say, in Russia. There it flourished exceedingly under the Romanoffs, for it was able to grow a parent tree of its own from which sprouted many stout and fruitful branches. When and how that tree will bear again who shall say? In two other Entente countries besides France, namely, Italy and America, the lyric stage also preserves its activity. We have read with amazement of the number of small American theatres that have held their own with the larger opera-houses during these four eventful years; producing fewer new operas than usual, perhaps, but somehow always "carrying on." Even Puccini has taken up his pen again and written a group of three one-act operas, which are to be brought to a hearing shortly in New York and given soon afterwards at the Scala. But it is actually the United States that has constituted the chief centre of operatic life and enterprise since the winter of 1914-15. The revolution of feeling and vogue has not been less extraordinary in this than in less peaceful directions. From inveterate Wagnerites and thoroughgoing lovers of the German repertoire, the American public have veered round to every other quarter of the operatic compass. They have interned every singer or musician of enemy alien birth; they have long ceased to tolerate the use of the once adored, now hated Teutonic text. Instead, they have taken to their hearts not only French and Italian, Belgian and Spanish artists, but welcomed to the stage of the Metropolitan Opera House their own compatriots, singing the English language in operas written by American composers.

Ten years ago, when the direction of this same establishment was in the hands of a German and an Austrian, the suggestion was made to them (by an English musician then living in New York) that the proper thing to do was to have opera sung to people in their own tongue. The idea was politely rejected as impracticable and out of the question, just as it had been at Covent Garden a decade before that. But, apart from the conditions brought about by the war, the underlying truth of the proposition was too strong to be long resisted. If you go to the opera merely to be in the fashion or to hear famous singers, the language used by the latter does not matter very much. Hence the prolonged reign of "Italian Opera"; providing as it did the means for bringing together with its universal text great vocal artists of all nationalities. If, on the other hand, you go to hear an opera because you love the music and the drama of it, or, better still, because you can become engrossed in the interdependence of their movements, than a complete understanding of what is being said as well as sung is of the utmost importance. Imagine in this case the vital and inestimable value of distinct enunciation. Unless the words are heard in conjunction with the music, the stage action becomes reduced to the level of mere dumb-show.

Our present plea is not, however, especially concerned with the language of opera in the coming years. English opera has long ceased to be a neglected "ugly duckling." It is as fine and flourishing a bird now as any in the family, and perfectly well able to fend for

itself. Neither do we care whether Drury Lane or Covent Garden, or the new opera-house which is bound to come some day, be the central point wherefrom the inevitable Renaissance shall radiate. Our real anxiety for the future of opera in this country has to do rather with the application to it of those forces which have secured its survival and prosperity in other lands. The forces in question consist in the main of the following elements:—(1) the support and partial control of the State, or in lieu thereof (as in America) the capital and personal interest supplied by wealthy lovers of the art; (2) the engagement of a certain proportion of available singers of the first rank, British for choice, but also foreign when merit or need compels; (3) the encouragement of the study of opera by rising native vocalists and composers through the establishment of a national training school and the payment of adequate salaries to the finished artist; and (4) the maintenance of an unexceptionable standard of excellence in the performances.

Now there is nothing so insuperably difficult, so exclusively idealistic, in these conditions that they should be regarded as unrealizable in this country, and that ere long. The name of State-control is not popular just now. But it is nonsense to pretend that the inhabitants of this metropolis do not want opera, or that the provision and direction of it on their behalf should be vested in a single individual, however rich or however talented. Monopolies in art are rarely unaccompanied by evils of some sort, and the particular one to which we most object in the present operatic monopoly is embodied in a policy that harmfully affects three out of the four conditions enumerated above. It is the evil of allowing commercial considerations to unite with personal whim, caprice, or prejudice in the government of a large operatic institution.

The Beecham Company, to which we are of course referring, might be made the nucleus of a worthy national undertaking. But to achieve this it would have to be strengthened and improved in well-nigh every detail. It does not include a solitary singer of the first rank. Reliance has to be placed almost wholly upon British talent, and that in the present year of grace is respectable, no more. So much the worse for the public. The level of the performances does not improve. A creditable ensemble counts for a great deal, but not for everything. Our chief complaint is that the singing remains inferior. Not alone are the voices of the principals poor in quality, but their declamation has no breadth or nobility; their style is too often amateurish, their vocalization, save in rare instances, lacking in finished grace and charm. It is as inconceivable that these attributes should be beyond our reach as that they should be missing from the executive economy of a leading opera company. It may be true that the vocal art of to-day is but the pale shadow of what it was when Patti and Melba and the De Reszkes were being heard in London thirty years ago. It is not yet, however, a lost art. We are merely out of touch with it here, and there is no reason why we should continue to be so. The standard in America is much higher, and it is being kept up at the present time by the payment of better salaries and a judicious mixture of the foreign with the native elements. It is useless to depend upon the native entirely if there are not enough good singers to go round.

Meanwhile, if we are to honestly prepare the way for better things in the domain of opera, it will be as well for the critics likewise to raise their standard. In the place of unmeasured praise, not to say flattery, for every example of opera that we are favoured with, let us see faults fearlessly pointed out, bad singing described as it deserves to be, and generally helpful criticism employed to rescue the art of the lyric theatre from its present low level. Properly directed, the efforts of the Press should do much towards achieving a safe and solid future for opera in this country.

ETCHINGS BY JAMES MCBEY.

SEVEN years have now passed since the first exhibition of this artist's work was held in London. The present exhibition at Messrs. Colnaghi and Obach's Galleries, in New Bond Street, is, without doubt, the most representative collection of McBey's etchings that the public has as yet had an opportunity of seeing.

The various stages of development are here presented step by step. In fact, only two really important plates are missing; we refer to 'Amsterdam from Runsdorp' (1910) and 'The Lion Brewery' (1914). As, however, these two plates represent the artist in his happiest mood, it will be necessary at a later stage to return to them.

When James McBey came to London in the year 1911, he was at once recognised by discriminating collectors as an extremely clever artist. The general public, ever slow to give recognition to a new comer, because we suppose they have no confidence in their own judgment, for once showed a more intelligent appreciation than usual. As a result, whenever it was known that a new plate was about to appear, its advent was always eagerly awaited by many more people than had any chance of acquiring an impression.

It has been said that there is nothing really new or original in McBey's work, and that his success is in the main due to the influence of Rembrandt. Nothing is further from the truth. No great etcher could altogether fail to be influenced by the greatest master of the needle. If he were to escape that wonderful influence, he would not be a great etcher. It is, however, one thing to allow oneself to be influenced by what is great, and quite another thing to copy slavishly the style of another artist. McBey has been so clever, and so fortunate, as to have received the influence without having developed into a copyist. Only on one occasion has he copied Rembrandt too closely, and to this case we will refer at a later stage.

Of McBey it is true to say that he is a pure etcher, that is to say he understands the quality of a true etched line as understood by Rembrandt, which Sir Frank Short has aptly described "as the free line, instinct by vitality, drawn with an upright point truly sharpened and bitten with the delicacy of a spider's web where necessary, and with the necessary vigour and robustness in other parts."

In only one plate, 'The Somme Front' (45), has he been guilty of smudge, or if you will, *retoussage*, or mezzotint effect. It is a very real temptation to an artist to aim at pictorial effect and so please the general public. Such a tendency usually results in smudge, and great credit must be given to McBey in that he has sternly resisted resorting to a method so many other artists indulge in so lavishly.

In 'Moray House, Edinburgh' (11), and 'Grassmarket, Edinburgh' (68), both of which plates belong to the year 1905, the work is still very immature. But was not this also the case with the very early work of his great contemporary, Anders Zorn?

In 1910, 'Amsterdam from Runsdorp' was published, and although this plate is not represented in the exhibition under review, it is necessary to refer to it, as it was the first great landmark in McBey's work. Since 1910 the art of McBey has made notable strides; it is doubtful, however, if he has ever produced a finer plate than this one, which may be said to possess every quality that goes to make a really great etching.

'The Shower' (11), and 'The Skylark' (24), belong to the year 1912. In both plates the influence of Rembrandt can be felt. In the case of the latter it is not merely an influence, it amounts to an almost slavish copying, without, of course, the master's touch, this being the one regrettable instance of copying to which we have referred above.

For some unaccountable reason these two plates are popular. This is strange, as they are not in the least typical of McBey, or indeed important. 'El Soko' (28), 'The Story Teller' (55), and 'Tangier' (60), are of the same period, and are certainly the finest plates of The Morocco Set. Observe the wonderful grouping of the countless figures in 'El Soko,' and the wonderful force of the central figure in 'The Story Teller.'

It would be sheer folly to pretend that these plates represent McBey at high-water mark; they do, however, represent a distinct advance both in originality and in technique, and bring us one step at least further forward, to the great things which were soon to come.

'Penzance' (48), in spite of the obvious imperfections in the foreground, is another important plate of the 1913 period, and is worthy of special notice. In 'Buchan' (38), an early brilliant impression from the artist's collection, we see the influence of Rembrandt, but there is no copying here, as in 'Skylark.' Again in 'Norfolk Village' (41), the influence of the master is present, but in every line of the plate the original treatment of McBey is discernible. Observe the clever way foul biting has been used on the boats. These two plates belong to 1914 and 1915 respectively.

'The Lion Brewery,' 1914, one of McBey's finest plates is unfortunately, not represented.

In 'Night, Ely Cathedral' (40), which belongs to 1915, we see what is perhaps the finest rendering of a night effect ever produced by the needle, without resort to *retoussage*.

'The Crucifix, Boulogne' (29), is another important plate; note the rendering of the hillside, and the distant town across the water. Truly, the impression is the most brilliant one in the whole show, the green paper suiting the subject to perfection.

Lastly, we come to the greatest of them all, 'The Torpedoed Sussex' (43). What could be more skilful than the charming group on the left, or again the blaze of sunlight on the hull of the battered ship? Both these plates were published in 1916.

No plate appeared during 1917-18, owing to the appointment of Lieutenant McBey as an Official War Artist.

It may be stated with confidence and assurance that James McBey has already won a place amongst the masters of etching. It is necessary, however, to remember that, as in the case of all artists, the really great things are few and far between. McBey's work, however, contains a much higher percentage of great things than is the case with other modern masters, which leads one to believe that the future has much in store both for the artist, and for lovers of fine prints.

"TWELFTH NIGHT" AT THE COURT THEATRE.

SHAKESPEARE'S comedies have often been severely handled by the critics, from Pepys who pronounced 'A Midsummer Night's Dream' the silliest play that ever he saw, and was frankly bored by 'Twelfth Night,' to Mr. Bernard Shaw, who was wont in these columns to maintain that the author's contempt for these trifling productions is plainly declared in their titles, 'As you like it,' and 'What you will,' signifying that you, the playgoer, enjoy this kind of thing, being a frivolous person quite unfitted for the intellectual appeal of 'Hamlet' or 'All's Well.' For our part we would be content to measure the civilisation of the Elizabethan age by its reception of Shakespeare's comedies, and the civilisation of succeeding ages by their zest in reviving them. We can imagine a comparatively rude audience absorbed by 'Macbeth,' 'Othello,' or 'Hamlet.' Murder, jealousy and revenge are popular themes, and well understood up to a point by wits of high and low degree. But faced with a play like 'Twelfth Night,' we cannot avoid the conclusion that the age of Elizabeth was civilised beyond the dreams of this modern world. Shakespeare's genius in his tragedies often woos the multitude as Jove wooed the pretty daughters of men—the Swan of Avon with Leda for his audience. But Shakespeare in his comedies appears without disguise. He appeals to an audience educated in every sense of the word. In witnessing 'Twelfth Night' we derive our pleasure from a supreme felicity of expression, from strokes of character only equalled for their refinement in, say, the novels of George Meredith, from a presentment of social moods and values conveying the humour and spirit of civilised English intercourse at its best. Such a comedy is obviously the product of an age which

attached enormous value to subtle moods, delicate emotions, graces of thought and speech and manner, which can only flower from a leisure well bestowed. The dramatist who conceived Orsino, and set him upon a public stage was clearly writing for a generation of exquisites, a generation beside which, for all their surface elegance, the generation of Congreve was comparatively barbarous.

To judge from the success which has attended Mr. J. B. Fagan's production of 'Twelfth Night,' at the Court Theatre, the present age is not altogether indisposed to dwell upon this or that particular hue of the "changeable taffeta" which is Shakespeare's 'Twelfth Night.' Playgoers who desire the theatre to be more than a Box of Tricks are already finding their way to the Court Theatre where Mr. Fagan offers the most perfect of Shakespeare's comedies as the first production of what we hope will be a long and prosperous season. There is no question here of an appeal *ad misericordiam* on behalf of a good cause. It is a question of pure enjoyment, as the more alert of those who to-day are starving for reasonable amusement have, we are glad to say, already begun to discover.

As a producer of Shakespeare Mr. Fagan has found a vocation in which he must somehow be retained. He has that rarest of qualifications in a Shakespearean producer. He believes in his author. The ambition to produce Shakespeare seldom arises out of a simple faith or pleasure in Shakespeare's dramatic genius. It often arises out of an actor's faith in the part of Hamlet or pleasure in the part of Falstaff. It sometimes arises out of a producer's desire to be magnificent or electric, or to show that he understands better than most what Shakespeare really intended, or, more often, how Shakespeare can be improved. Even Mr. Granville Barker, who almost succeeded in restoring Shakespeare to the English stage, produced his author more as a critic and as a solver of problems, for which his author had neglected to provide solutions, than as a devout interpreter. With the single exception of Mr. Martin Harvey's joyous revival of 'The Taming of the Shrew' some years ago, we can think of no important modern production of Shakespeare wherein the producer or the actor was not mainly pre-occupied with dotting fictitious i's and crossing imaginary t's with apologies thrown askance at the playgoer for the "shocking hand" of our national poet.

And now comes Mr. Fagan caring only that Shakespeare's text shall have its due value, presenting in their natural succession the scenes, moods, persons of the comedy, allowing his intelligence and feeling to play upon each interlude as it passes, and, out of his own instinctive faith that Shakespeare knew what he was achieving, and did not fortuitously mix his colours or entangle his threads, bringing us mind to mind with Shakespeare's authentic plan. We have never before been so aware in the theatre how exquisitely Shakespeare has blended the motives of his play. Where so many producers have emphasised this or that in the design which happened to appeal to them, Mr. Fagan allows the design itself to show. This is not to suggest that Mr. Fagan's part in the affair is slavish or passive. He has a lively appreciation of all the elements of the comedy; but he is careful that his appreciation shall be no more than sufficient for the matter in hand. In the result we obtain a view of the play as a whole; we realise the lovely sanity, the breadth of charity, and poise of judgment, the movement of contrasting parts in a flawless dramatic counterpoint, which puts it so securely among the masterpieces of the theatre. As scenes follow lightly and swiftly we seem to see the diverse strands of which our comedy is composed, caught up by the quick shuttle of action and incident and wonder into one luminous texture before our enchanted eyes.

Mr. Fagan is admirably served by a company of which every member falls loyally into the scheme. The lovers of the play keep time and tune throughout. Were ever three lovers brought together in the same play so exquisitely various—Orsino, in love with an unrequited passion, a lover, who, whether it be Olivia or Cesario will always be more enamoured with his own exquisite feelings about love than with

their object; Olivia, the great sophisticated lady, falling perversely into love out of idleness, distracted and at issue with her dignity, but not easily losing her sense that she has marvels to bestow upon the favoured; Viola, whose love is fresh, ardent, and yet unspoken in cunning contrast with the beautifully published adoration of her lord and the pitiful solicitings of her lord's lady. For Orsino we have Mr. Terence O'Brien, a pleasure to see and to hear, exquisite connoisseur of music and phrase, delighting to discourse of his own love or of love in general, the spoiled child of a superfine leisure turning from the "sov'rain cruelty" of the one dear lady to the comely acquiescence of the other. For Olivia we have Miss Mary Grey—the companion picture. What a pity these two could not make a match of it—Orsino to be for ever in love with his own infatuation, and Olivia to be for ever in love with its cause! For Viola we have Miss Leah Bateman, a woman in her masquerade, but never obtruding her sex, so that we can see her with Olivia's eyes or mistake her with the eyes of Sir Toby. This is the best since Ellen Terry presented her. No actress has of recent years achieved anything so entirely right and satisfactory as Miss Bateman's delivery of the difficult speech in which she comments on the strange complication of her fortunes. She puts the whole of Viola into that speech—love and loyalty for Orsino, compassion touched with resentment for Olivia, and for her own aid in distress resolute humour, and the zest of youth for what the next moment may bring.

But the lovers are only one small corner of 'Twelfth Night.' We must limit our terms of reference to Mr. Arthur Whitby's Sir Toby, and Mr. Herbert Waring's Malvolio. Mr. Whitby's Sir Toby was one of the best things in Mr. Granville Barker's production at the Savoy. It has suffered no detriment by having fallen into hands more tolerant of the "lethargy" to which Sir Toby is incorrigibly prone. Sir Toby at the Court Theatre drinks deeper than Sir Toby at the Savoy. But we never forget that this same Sir Toby deeply though he be drowned, and deeply fallen from grace, is inherently a scholar and a gentleman. There is, perhaps, no more moving season in the range of comedy than the scene of the revels, as handled by actors who know what they are about. The outward jollity only the more clearly emphasises the sad collocation of that amazingly asserted trio. Feste, the disillusioned man of quick feeling and swift observation, clowning partly for livelihood and partly for disguise; Sir Toby, the gentleman of breeding and man of the polite world, reduced to living on his wits and justifying his courses as well as he may by putting a bravely ribald face upon necessity; and Sir Andrew, merely the echo of other men's words and fashions, a pipe for folly's finger to sound which stop she pleases.

Mr. Waring's Malvolio displays the solid worth of the fellow, showing us a self-love which is partly justified, an aspiration ridiculous more in its excess than in its nature. Rightly he does not insist too sourly upon the puritan—an element in the character exaggerated alike by critics and actors. His rebuking of the revellers is less an act of the tabernacle than of the steward, solicitous for the dignity of his lady's house. Partly also it is the act of a man of sense but of no humour, whose decorum is inevitably outraged by artists and adventurers, and all such as forget their right place in the social scheme. Mr. Waring, allowing full weight to the rectitude and dignity of Malvolio is able to make strictly the right effect in the last scene when the unhappy dreamer, pressed too far by the jest against him, becomes almost a tragic figure. Mr. Waring's performance is so good that advice is perhaps an impertinence. We would, however, like a little less extravagance of demeanour in Malvolio transported, less tossing of the head, a smile turned less upon the lady than upon interior visions of greatness. Malvolio in this scene should radiate a self-love gratified beyond the dream of vanity. It is fortune he thanks for Olivia's love, not Aphrodite. It is his velvet gown on which he dwells, and not upon the sweetness and cunning of his lady's face.

AD MISERICORDIAM.

Oh, spare our happy German homes!
Along the castled Rhine,
The cataract below them foams,
Above them climbs the vine.

We reared them years ago from store
Of Frenchmen's hoarded gold,
Our hearts have learned to love them more,
As years have o'er them rolled.

Here Fritz was born; here Gretchen grew;
Their *Kultur* here they learned:
From hence our hunger'd eagles flew,
Nor empty e'er returned.

Yon clock that ticks above the fire
In France our Hermann found,
When Coucy's keep, and Albert's spire
Were tumbled to the ground.

This pretty *broderie* Wilhelm brought
From Louvain to his wife;
He stripped it from a priest who fought,
Till Otto's steaming knife.

That *collier* from a Countess came,
Her lips to Hans denied;
The insolent, the heartless Dame.
In his embrace she died.

This *reliquaire*, of crystal clear,
On Fère's high altar stood:
Our pepper has replaced the tear—
A tasteless drop with food.

Dear all these relics—spare them; spare,
For Fritz's, Wilhelm's sake!
Should they return, nor find them there,
Their warrior hearts would break.

* * * * *

Expect them not—The sea claimed Fritz—
Wilhelm we shot, for looting:
And Hans? Ah, Hans got hacked to bits,
For deeds too foul for shooting.

C. D.

CORRESPONDENCE.

AUTOCRACY AND DEMOCRACY.

To the Editor of THE SATURDAY REVIEW.

SIR,—Mr. Asquith, in addressing a Glasgow audience on November 1st with respect to his ten years' leadership, is reported to have said:—"During those ten years—I speak now of the time before the war broke out—we did not let the grass grow under our feet. We established old-age pensions and national insurance. We carried through the great budget of 1909. We clipped the wings of the House of Lords by the Parliament Act. We put upon the statute-book the Home Rule Act and the Welsh Disestablishment Act. That is not a bad record." It might more accurately have been described as a vote-catching effort, and, as a record, open to considerable criticism, irrespective of that—especially when we remember the questionable method by which the powers of the Lords were curtailed. Moreover, Mr. Asquith and his Ministry *did* let the grass grow under their feet. In defiance of expert opinion they persistently neglected to prepare for war, which was the only thing that mattered.

Elsewhere in his speech, while attacking autocracy, he exclaims, "Where are the three Emperors to-day?" thus placing the late Tsar of Russia, our Ally, in the same category with our enemies of Germany and Austria. Russia was an autocracy, so it was but consistent from Mr. Asquith's point of view that she should go under. Now, we did not embark on this war in the interests of democracy. We joined in with

three other Great Powers, two of whom were hereditary monarchies. And it was the lapse of one of these monarchies into a democracy that might have lost us the war. Should a similar lapse happen to Japan—which, happily, is not to be anticipated—we should lose another confederate. It is fatuous to suppose that the world can be democratised, or that democratic governments can be guaranteed for democratic states. The heads of such states may develop into autocrats. And, as a matter of fact, no greater autocratic power can be conceived than that possessed by President Wilson.

Yours faithfully,
C. H. BURLTON.

The Wellington Club, Grosvenor Place, S.W.

To the Editor of THE SATURDAY REVIEW.

SIR,—We are all rejoicing to-day at the destruction of the brutal and tyrannical German Army—at the overthrow, that is, of the German militarism which for the last four years has held the world at bay.

No other Power could with equal numbers have done what Germany, as head and front, as heart and soul, of the Central Alliance, has been able to accomplish, because it has been given to no other power to recognise, as the German people have done, the virtue and the efficiency of discipline. Much ridicule has been thrown on Germans for their readiness to accept the claims and to submit to the orders of a military caste, but Germans of all classes felt, consciously or unconsciously, that if their nation was to become the greatest in the world this could only be achieved by German readiness to accept the bonds of iron discipline, which, while it certainly curbs and mars the best of mankind, gives to the weakest and the foolishlest a power, as part of the machine, and an efficiency which they never possessed before. They also felt—though they might not care to say it—that if tyranny is inevitable as the price of national aggrandisement, it had better be the tyranny of those with traditions from the past and a stake in the country, which gives them an interest in the future, rather than the tyranny of upstarts. The Junkers who had such a large share in bringing the German army to perfection had many faults, but they were in the main, as Mr. Gerard testifies, men of simple habits and of incomparable devotion to duty, as they understood the word, with a passionate, narrow-minded loyalty to the Crown and the Fatherland which made them capable of the greatest self-sacrifice on the one hand and the greatest brutality on the other.

While the German army, with its marvellous discipline and endurance, represents Militarism in its most successful, and therefore, also, in its most hateful form, Democracy, with its failings and its virtues, is represented by the magnificent but rather undisciplined Australian contingents. In attack they are unrivalled, indeed almost unequalled, but their lack of military rigidity renders them less successful in holding a line, while their democratic contempt for discipline makes them at times a terror to their friends as well as to their enemies. In Egypt, as we all know, they terrorised the natives—for they have an intense dislike for "niggers," and indeed for all men of colour—which some Imperialists think is a good thing, but is scarcely consonant either with the Pax Britannica or English justice. In this connection we may note that no Australian soldier is ever shot, whatever offence he may commit, and that absenteeism, drunkenness, etc., etc., are regarded with leniency. Thus it comes that the Provost Marshal has one code of conduct for the British soldier and another for the Australian, a thing which scarcely tends to the promotion of good feeling.

In all this talk about "making the world safe for democracy" Australian politicians, always, and Australian soldiers, sometimes, forget that "freedom" and "free institutions" exist for others as well as themselves. In no other country in the world is mob-government so harsh and so cruel as it is in Australia.

Under democracy respect for authority of every kind, parental, social and ecclesiastical tends to disappear until, finally, the citizen who objects to all laws which he has not shared in making becomes a law unto himself. In England to-day bigamy, bastardy and syphilis are flourishing as they have never flourished before, while theft and dishonesty of every sort are hardly regarded as reprehensible. Scarcity, disease, sensuality and lawlessness—these are often the *sequela* of war, and now is the opportunity for the Churches of Christendom to seek to restore to men and women the self-control which modern conditions have done so much to destroy.

Unfortunately, for the moment it seems hopeless to appeal to Religion as the one power left on earth able to check and to guide "the unruly wills and affections of sinful men." For Christianity has suffered like everything else by the war, and the Roman Catholic Church, which could formerly claim to be the depository not only of Faith but of moral control also, is rapidly losing her power. In Ireland—"the Isle of the Saints"—in order to preserve the loyalty of their flocks, the priests have to make strange alliances, and if the peasant will but stick to his creed his spiritual pastor and master winks at treason and robbery and outrage. In Belgium the Catholics are embittered by the war and think the Pope might have prevented it; while in France, where there has been a genuine religious revival, the growing tendency towards Gallicanism bodes ill for the authority of Rome.

As for the English Church, when bishops mount the red cap of Liberty—or rather Licence—and play at demagoguery we know that we are nearing the end. Dogmatic Christianity depends very largely upon authority and tradition for its influence, and when authority and tradition are flouted in the home, in the schools, on the platform and in Parliament itself, we know that they cannot long survive in the pulpit and before the altar. The mind of man does not work in water-tight compartments, and when he is taught "to speak evil of Dignities" every week-day, he is likely on Sunday to pay little heed to the claims of the clergy, who seek to make up by a theoretical knowledge of the next world for a profound practical ignorance of this.

Yours faithfully,

C. F. RYDER.

Scarcroft, near Leeds, 4th Nov., 1918.

THE PETROLEUM MONOPOLY.

To the Editor of THE SATURDAY REVIEW.

SIR,—My attention has been called to an article about the Petroleum Bill in THE SATURDAY REVIEW of the 26th ult., and as one who officially and unofficially has done his best to bring about the drilling of certain test wells, I feel it necessary to put my views before you for what they are worth.

I regret that the article in question should have mentioned the names of any officials in connection with other matters. Whether certain officials are interested financially, either personally or through their relations and friends, in manufacturing chemicals for Government Departments, cellulose acetate, chlor-picrine or what not, has nothing to do with this question of oil. The point is, are those officials competent, and did they do their work?

Their competency may be a matter of opinion, but that they took no effective action for a year and a half after the subject was put before them definitely and in detail, is a fact that cannot be denied.

Everyone should welcome Lord Cowdray's patriotic offer, and should wish him and his scientific staff success in their endeavour to discover petroleum in this country. But it was no new discovery of Lord Cowdray's geologists that there were prospects of obtaining oil by boring. The work of the Geological Survey has made it clear to every geologist with experience of petroleum that there are several fair speculative chances of striking oil, and before ever Lord Cowdray's scientific staff took the matter in hand, others, including the writer, had been making observations and collecting

data bearing upon the subject. The writer has, in fact, furnished information to Lord Cowdray's staff, and has reported to them at length upon what is probably the most favourable locality in the country.

The granting of a monopoly of oil drilling to any one firm, however, is a dangerous thing to do, whether it be done openly or by deliberately and insidiously obstructing and delaying all rival firms.

In the matter of cellulose acetate the granting of a monopoly has had unfortunate consequences, which no one would wish to see repeated in regard to another of the country's essential needs.

Your article, if only in the interests of fair play to land-owners, and to those who have the requisite knowledge and enterprise for oil-drilling, cannot fail to do good in bringing into the open a somewhat shady piece of departmental or political trickery.

I am, yours,
E. H. CUNNINGHAM CRAIG.

Marseille, France.
29 October, 1918.

To the Editor of THE SATURDAY REVIEW.

SIR,—Where have Pearson's Geological Department gained their experience and knowledge of minerals in Derbyshire? They did not make the railways, neither the Erewash Valley Railway nor the Ambergate to Chesterfield. Had they made either, they would have learnt something, if only where coal crops out, and what it was like. On July 24th, 1918, I wrote to a gentleman in London on the control of coal and the doings in 1876 at a colliery. I was interested in in Derbyshire, and in my letter I said that "it would not surprise me if some of the oil we need could be found at this same pit, as blackshale crops out near." I had no reply, and near to where Pearsons are said to be boring there are ten seams of coal down to a depth of 443 yards, viz., (1) 30 yards, (2) 60 yards, (3) 90 yards, (4) 103 yards, (5) 123 yards, (6) 203 yards, (7) 267 yards, (8) 312 yards, (9) 383 yards, and (10) 443 yards. I can give the name of each seam or section. Now, if Pearsons expect to find oil under all these seams of coal, I, for one, think that they will have to teem it down the bore hole first. I see from the papers that Pearsons are getting tackle for boring to South Normanton and Pye Bridge. Hundreds of tons of best hard coal and hard steam coal were carted to Alfreton Station and put into coal wagons in the 'sixties from a pit at South Normanton, not a very oily looking coal; I knew it well, and Pearsons are going to have a flutter where rumour says oil was found in 1847. I was only a small boy then, but I remember the tale that was told, that a barrel of oil had burst in the yard, and the oil had run into the working. It might only have been a joke, but a report in the papers a short time ago "that the oil trickled through the roof in the pit" would almost prove the burst-barrel tale the true one. I never heard of 300 gallons per day for two years being found. There is plenty of money, and if I might offer advice to Pearsons, I should say find the exact spot where oil trickled through the roof, and head out, follow the dip of the mine to the first fault, or throw down, and you might find a little sea of oil.

There is no doubt that there is shale in plenty that could be treated for oil, both in Derbyshire and Lancashire and other counties.

Yours, etc.,
J. J. S.

10, Two Trees Lane, Denton, near Manchester,
November 5th, 1918.

CLUB MANAGEMENT.

To the Editor of THE SATURDAY REVIEW.

SIR,—I have been very much interested in the correspondence on this subject that has appeared in THE SATURDAY REVIEW; the more especially so as I was once on the committee of a club, the management of which was subsequently entrusted to Mr. Simpson, by the proprietors of the club.

The club in question had been run at a loss of about £100 a month for some considerable time. This we attributed to war conditions in general, and to loss of members in particular.

I do not think there was a single member of the club who was not up in arms at the proprietors' decision to remove the management from the hands of the committee, with a view to transferring it to the tender mercies of a dictator. The committee of the day called an extraordinary general meeting to protest, and from every corner of the room voices were raised expressing indignation at the decision to place the members under the iron heel of a paid official. All this happened about two years ago.

What was the position at the end of the first year of the new regime, and what is the position to-day? The loss on the first year was only £300 as compared with £1,200 in the preceding twelve months. The last year has shown a profit, and, moreover, an increased membership of over 250, and this in war time. It will be asked how was the change of affairs brought about, in what direction, and at what cost to the comfort of members was retrenchment made?

I have reason to know that the proprietors pressed Mr. Simpson to cut down expenses in every direction, and the reply they received was "retrenchment be damned, we have got to launch out in every possible way," and, lo and behold! it was so. Mr. Simpson was advised to drop the hot luncheon as a war economy; the hot luncheon was not dropped; rather, with the help of a thoroughly efficient secretary and steward, it was improved out of all recognition.

What perhaps impressed me more than anything else on visiting the club at a later date, was the "secretary's" office. I found every inch of the wall space was taken up with elaborate charts in multicoloured inks, showing week by week the cost of all the different raw materials bought, the price at which they were sold, and the net profit or loss on the sale. Some of the articles, such as a very special liqueur brandy, and a special brand of cigars, were deliberately sold at a loss. I heard a rumour that thirty shillings a bottle was paid for that brandy.

It will be said, "how immoral!" but was it? Was it not rather a true appreciation of the frailties of human nature which a business man was quick enough to see he had to pander to in the greater interest. For my part I am prepared to be generous, and to frankly admit that results have amply justified the policy of the new management.

I am informed that at the particular club in question, the entrance fee, which was doubled at the beginning of the war, has been put on again. It would be interesting to know whether any other club has found it possible to do this during the war.

Of course a London Club is not a golf club, but neither is an operation for adenoids the same as an operation for appendicitis, but it would be folly to suggest that the same surgeon could not perform them both. Of course different methods would have to be adopted, but business principles are the same all the world over.

With all due apologies for the length of this letter.

I am, sir, etc., etc.,
A CONVERT.

November 4th, 1918.

To the Editor of THE SATURDAY REVIEW.

SIR,—For many years I have seen what manifest advantages would be derived by clubs if a "Club Supply Association" for co-operative purchase could be started on a firm basis. With this end in view, in July, 1914, I had arranged for a private and informal meeting of influential members of several well-known clubs to discuss the scheme I had prepared in rough outline and decide the next step to be taken if, in their opinion, it would probably succeed: owing to the outbreak of the war this meeting was not summoned.

Seeing Mr. Simpson's letter in your paper I am induced to reopen the matter and invite communications

from committee men of first-class clubs, who are in sympathy with this idea, and would be prepared to attend a meeting to consider it.

Yours faithfully,

T. HAMILTON FOX.

39, Cheyne Walk, S.W. 3.

"GIT!"

(TO THE MIDDLING CLASSES).

To the Editor of THE SATURDAY REVIEW.

SIR,—When the war is over, the prospects in this country of people of so-called independent means will be dismal in the extreme.

In one of your recent "Notes of the Week," calling attention to the great increase in Metropolitan Rates, it was pointed out that very soon it would not be a question for the inhabitants of "Feeding the Guns," but of feeding themselves.

In grave and serious earnest, that is the prospect before countless numbers of what Pitt called "the middling classes" in this country.

They are scattered, unorganised and consequently helpless, whilst the whole power of the future, central and local, will be in the hands of organised labour and organised socialism, both of which, in a thousand different ways, will think it right and proper to exploit the "have got" for the benefit of the "have nots."

The following consequences may therefore be anticipated:

- (1) Imperial taxation must continue to be enormous:—
 - (a) to pay interest on our colossal National debt;
 - (b) to pay all wage-earners, in the employ of the State, whatever remuneration the "have-nots" demand;
 - (c) to provide generously for all those who have been disabled by the war, and for those dependent on the men who have been killed;
 - (d) for national education, and other wants regarded as "National" by those who, in the future, will have "the right to call the tune" whilst compelling other people to "pay the piper."
- (2) Local taxation will increase by leaps and bounds, to pay for the Housing Schemes, and other schemes calculated to enhance the comforts, conveniences and leisured luxuries of the "have nots"—the only people who will count.
- (3) The cost of all the necessities and conveniences of life, e.g., house rent, repairs, furniture, food, fuel, light, clothing, education, servants, books, medical attendance, drugs, &c., &c., will continue at extraordinary high levels, to form one of the principal causes that will keep up rates and taxes.
- (4) Whilst expenses will thus keep outrageously high, the incomes of investments will tend to decrease or disappear altogether.

The position then of people of moderate independent means will gradually become desperate. No longer able to live on their attenuated incomes, they will gradually get deeper and deeper into debt. Their capital will gradually shrink, and, in the end, ruin will overtake them.

Now what is the remedy?

In the succinct language of our American friends, the remedy—the only remedy—is "Git."

There are still places in the world, in which a triumphant proletariat is not enabled, by laws of its own creation, to live luxuriously on the plunder of the more helpless classes.

With reasonable and intelligent organisation many thousands of families, who in the past have been able to live in comfort in England on their means, could even now save enough out of the wrecks of their fortunes to live in reasonable comfort and respectability, under kinder skies than those of England, and in lands

where the advocates of socialistic plundering are not the rulers of the land.

Co-operation and organisation is, however, necessary to enable people, separately and individually helpless, to save themselves and their families from the ruin which now so imminently threatens them.

Yours faithfully,

"FOREWARNED IS FOREARMED."

POETRY AND LAW.

To the Editor of THE SATURDAY REVIEW.

SIR,—I don't think I ever said that if lines scanned, rhymed and meant something they were therefore poetry: but "Mary had a little lamb" is a fair hit. Poetry, I suppose, may be divided into three kinds: 1, Pastoral; 2, Satirical, or moral; 3, Transcendental, or psychological.

1. Pastoral poetry is mere description of landscapes, trees, flowers, sunsets, etc. It is painting with the pen what Constable and Turner paint with the brush and pencil. 2. Of satirical or moral poets, Dryden, Pope, and Byron are the best exemplars. Absalom and Achitophel, The Essay on Man, and Don Juan, are political and social satires in the heroic couplet or the Spenserian stanza, with poetical images scattered about. 3. It is when you come to the transcendental or psychological poetry, based on the mental experiences of the poet, that you get into difficulties about meaning. "In Memoriam" is a good example of psychological poetry, of which the meaning is always quite clear to an educated reader. But the meaning of Wordsworth, Coleridge, Keats, Shelley, Swinburne, is often obscure, and often non-existent. A great deal of admired poetry really means nothing at all. The lines which Mr. J. G. Fletcher quotes from Keats about "magic casements opening on the foam of perilous seas" really do mean nothing—at least, nothing that I can discover. Perhaps that is why they are so often quoted with fervour. R. L. Stevenson tells us a story of a serjeant in the gunners who used to spout long passages from 'Hamlet' without understanding more than one word in ten. How, asks Stevenson, could he understand such a line as 'unhousel'd, disappointed, unanealed'? Who, says R.L.S., does understand it? George Eliot says somewhere, rather cynically, that you must either give people what they are accustomed to or what they don't understand. For myself I decline to admire anything, in poetry, painting, or philosophy, which I do not understand. I prefer rhyme, but good blank verse, with a clear meaning, is excellent. Shelley is not always obscure. Here are some lines from 'Queen Mab,' in blank verse, scanning correctly and with a clear meaning that might be applied to the German Kaiser at this hour:—

"But now contempt is mocking thy grey hairs;
Thou art descending to the darksome grave
Unhonoured and unpitied, but by those
Whose pride is passing by like thine," etc.

Here is a terribly clear meaning. What I object to in the modern poets is that they have no prosody and no meaning. I am pleased to find that so experienced and accomplished a man of letters as Mr. E. S. P. Haynes says in one of the Essays in 'Personalia'—"I do not understand modern scansion"—nor does anybody else.

Yours truly,

NORMA.

To the Editor of THE SATURDAY REVIEW.

SIR,—Mr. Forrest Reid has, it seems, suggested that my recent letter on the simplicity of the truth regarding poetry is due to some personal feelings and not to a love of poetry.

I was led to write as I did because of the growing confidence of the Chaotic School, and on account of the published attack of Mrs. Hinkson on Swinburne, in which she called that splendid soul "a little man with a shock head full of sound and fury and signifying nothing," and Mr. Yeats's recently disclosed contempt for Shelley when he declared that he never wrote poetry

properly until he got rid of "the crude reds and yellows of Shelley."

My position was that of one who desired to defend the great dead, and to prove the incompetency of those who had insulted them. Personal feelings in the matter were quite absent.

Mr. Reid considers that it was unfair to quote a "sonnet" by Mr. Yeats which he had included in his book on that gentleman. Personally, I think that the "sonnet" is as good as anything Mr. Yeats ever wrote; and its defects were duly exhibited by me. But I cannot see any unfairness in attacking a "sonnet" which Mr. Reid himself described as an "exquisite sonnet." I proved that it was certainly far from exquisite, and not a sonnet at all. The public could hardly be edified were I to use up your valuable space in exhibiting the fact, as I did in your issue of 12th Oct., that the "mature work" of Mr. Yeats is as bad as his "early work."

But just in passing let me drop two of Mr. Yeats' typical decasyllabic lines. Here they are:—

"And though the drops are all we have known of life."

"Who had lost some unimaginable treasure."

About every tenth line Mr. Yeats manages to "hit it off"; so I suppose we may admit he is 1-10th of a poet, whatever that may be.

If anyone is anxious to test the merits of the Chaotic School, I recommend him to use the means provided in my letter under the heading of "The Simplicity of the Truth."

Your obedient servant,

HERBERT MOORE PIM.

Finaghy Cottage, Dunmurry, Co. Antrim.

28th October, 1918.

THE INFLUENZA EPIDEMIC.

To the Editor of THE SATURDAY REVIEW.

SIR,—As Mr. Arthur Lovell stated in your last Saturday's issue, "The healthy body has a natural power of resistance which far exceeds that of any serum that can be devised," and the fundamental cause of health is the sound condition of the blood.

Now let us ask ourselves what might be the percentage of really healthy people in the United Kingdom? Does it reach 25 per cent.? And what has hitherto been done by the medical profession to improve this deplorable state of things? Broadly spoken, the physician does not cure, but only patches, inasmuch as he rarely goes to the root of the evil by analysing the blood.

I am no longer in my first youth, and have been under medical treatment from time to time, but no physician or specialist has ever even suggested the expedient of blood analysis. Why? Is it because it is too much to ask, or wherein lies the reason?

A step in the right direction is on foot to hinder preventable disease, and it is here suggested that when the so much talked of Ministry of Health is in being, it should become law that all people receiving treatment in hospitals, nursing homes (all to be under license), and all prisoners should have the condition of the blood tested, under severe penalties for non-compliance; in order that elements detrimental to the system should be eliminated, the copies of such analysis to be duly forwarded to the Ministry of Health for registration.

As soon as practicable, government laboratories should be set up throughout the United Kingdom, solely occupied with blood analysis of the ailing. And lastly, it is of immense importance that no alien be admitted as resident to this country whose blood has not passed the required test.

Were the above ideas to be carried out, we should gradually have a nation of strong, healthy people, instead of one showing such a vast number of defects.

I remain, sir, your obedient servant,

C. H. RASCHEN.

6, Inverness Gardens,
Kensington, W. 8.

THE OPEN WINDOW.

To the Editor of THE SATURDAY REVIEW.

SIR,—If we are really to exercise strict economy in coal this winter and at the same time keep our bodies decently warm, our national fetish, the open window, must be thrown overboard. Otherwise we shall have the ridiculous spectacle of the Englishman cowering over a tiny fire, with the window wide open, under the mistaken impression that he is saving coal, whereas he is actually wasting it in a futile attempt to warm the air of the surrounding district instead of confining his efforts to the small space which he has carefully bricked in for his protection from the cold. The first window was simply a hole in the wall made to admit light. The air came in also, but it was not wanted, was regarded as an inevitable nuisance, and the earliest opportunity was taken of shutting it out by filling the hole with some translucent substance. Such windows were fixed and immovable as the wall of which they formed a part. I don't know who it was that first thought of making windows to open and shut, but he has a lot to answer for. In extenuation of his crime it may be urged that even in his most horrible nightmares he never could have imagined a nation that would fall down and worship the open window for itself alone.

In this country the opening (and leaving open) of windows at any time of the day or night during any season of the year is regarded as a praiseworthy action, whether the effect be suicidal, homicidal, or just mere ordinary cruelty to animals. This thoughtless and indiscriminate opening of windows may mean any or all of these things, but it *must* mean waste of fuel. How is it possible to heat a house economically if someone is continually punching holes in the walls and letting in the cold and damp? The best way to keep a house warm is never to let it get cold. Let the Coal Controller look to it and cease bleating about fire-bricks and coke. Let him strictly regulate the opening and shutting of windows and outside doors. If something is not done in this direction I foresee disaster. The average Englishman will honestly try to economise coal according to his lights. He will make do with fewer and smaller fires, but he will also continue to chill his house by opening windows and doors galore. The result will be sickness, which means greater waste of coal than ever, for sick people require fires in their bedrooms.

Yours faithfully,

C. A.

JOHN STERLING.

To the Editor of THE SATURDAY REVIEW.

SIR,—By an undesigned coincidence you had my brief epistle re neglect of John Sterling's grave, in the same issue as a review of Sir E. T. Cook's 'Literary Recreations,' in which the query occurs as the sequel to an allusion to Carlyle's "Life of Sterling":—"Why did Carlyle waste his talent in describing so futile a failure?"

If Sterling, who died young, and was the victim of pulmonary disease, was "a futile failure," where shall we look for success? Was 'The Pale Galilean' "a futile failure?" If Sterling had done no more than to write one of the best hymns in the language, his truncated career would have been a genuine and far-flung success. I refer to the hymn beginning: "O source divine and life of all" and containing these couplets:

"We shrink before Thy vast abyss,
Where worlds on worlds eternal brood"

and:

"Bestow on every joyous thrill,
Thy deeper tone of reverent awe."

Apparently, our twentieth century, with the omniscience of youth, has out-grown the recognition of mental conflict as the titled M.P. outgrows recognition of his poor relations, whom he repulses from his door as "futile failures." Mr. Gosse, forgetful of the noble service of intellectual veracity rendered by 'Father and Son,' has let the churchified Mrs. Grundy have her

way in his otherwise splendid 'Swinburne.' Sir Sydney Colvin, too, hangs on the skirts of that dear old lady in his delightful 'Keats,' and therefore misses the deeper psychology behind the lines:

"Where but to think is to be full of sorrow
And leaden-eyed desponds."

Can it be that the search after truth, the agony of the mental conflict, are now to be ignored and relegated to the category of "failings" to which tippling and excess in tobacco belong? Perhaps our Victorian elders, who laid stress upon conviction of truth about man's relation to the universe, and counted an anchorage of truth cheap at "many a labour, many a sorrow, many a tear," were a pack of fools, whom some of us cannot sufficiently blame for our evil heredity!

Yours faithfully,

9, Bonham Road,
Brixton Hill, S.W.

J. M. SLOAN.

THE ORGY OF WAR.

To the Editor of THE SATURDAY REVIEW.

SIR,—You published a pungent letter last week on our "noble women." The sad truth is that the six or seven millions a day now spent by Government have debauched the women of England (of the middle and lower classes) to an extent for which the nation will have to pay dearly for many a long year.

The number of domestic servants and tradesmen's daughters who have married soldiers in the belief, I am afraid I must say in the hope, that they would never see them again is notorious and appalling. It was obviously "good business" for the woman, whether she were a chamber-maid or a street-walker. She would get an allowance of 15s. or 16s. a week, £36 a year, as much as she could earn as housemaid (on the old scale of wages), and it would be paid by the State; therefore she could borrow on it, and anticipate it—and she would have to do nothing for it. When "hubby" comes home there will be trouble, even if he has only one arm to lift.

A higher class of young women have been demoralised in a different way. I have just heard of a young lady in an office which shall be nameless (she is 23 and fairly inefficient), who told everybody with unfeigned glee that she had just received £7 as "war bonus." As she is getting 35s. a week, never having earned 6d. in her whole life, she is "having the time of my life." She said—women are a little inaccurate about money—that in her room in the said Government office the amount distributed in bonuses was £30,000; and, upon my word, I can quite believe it.

The deplorable thing about this is, not only that you and I are being taxed to pay these young women, and in consequence have to stint our table and our children's education, but that the young women themselves are being demoralised and utterly unfitted to return to their former modes of life.

If the reckless and unscrupulous marriages with Tommies had increased the population, there might be something to be said for them. But it appears, from an answer given in the House of Commons the other day, that out of some 400,000 war marriages, about 390,000 had been childless.

The whole thing is an orgy, a debauchery of the female voters, for the purposes of the next election. That is my candid opinion. The result may be to make the women, who are half the electorate, love, instead of loathing, war. The Jingo of the twentieth century will be in petticoats.

Yours obediently,

A PROFESSIONAL MAN.

PAPER ECONOMY.

To the Editor of THE SATURDAY REVIEW.

SIR,—In reply to "Ex Omnibus Unus"—the Glasgow Corporation Tramways have had boxes at the car entrances for used tickets for more than two years. The idea has been a success and loose tickets on the cars or on the street are rarely seen.

Yours truly,

Scot.

REVIEWS.

DELIGHTFUL ESSAYS.

Personalia. By E. S. P. Haynes. London: Selwyn & Blount. 4s. 6d. net.

DESPITE of the publisher's frown, we have a strong predilection for essays, when they are, as in the case of the little volume before us, literature. The 'Personalia' of Mr. E. S. P. Haynes rather settles the question raised by Sir Edward Cook as to whether journalism is literature: for we suppose that Mr. Haynes would not object to be called a journalist. Our only quarrel with Mr. Haynes is that his essays are too short, which is no doubt due to the size of the journals in which some of them appeared. Were not the words "charm" and "distinction" "soiled with all ignoble use" we should have used them to convey our appreciation of this bundle of delightful monographs.

The articles on Edward Thomas, Master George Pollock, and Sir Harris Nicolas (one of the many undeserved failures in the world of letters), are models of compressed biography. The 'Three Men of Peace,' namely, Rupert and Alfred Brooke and F. H. Keeling, all Cambridge men, brings us to the tragedy of the war. We quite agree with what Mr. Haynes says in his preface, that the friends of the brilliant young men who have fallen by hundreds in this war "may not un-naturally resent the suggestion, dear to recruiting politicians and other admirers of Scott's Wardour Street feudalism, that to be prematurely assassinated by some Teutonic ruffian is in itself so illustrious a destiny as to extinguish all regrets for what might have been." We also endorse his remark that "under any intelligent system of conscription either he or his brother" (i.e., Rupert or Alfred Brooke) "would probably have been employed in a less hazardous department of the War Machine." When a nation is called upon to improvise in a year a system which will provide an army of five millions, we do not see how this heart-rending sacrifice of the best brains and blood of the country could have been avoided. The fact, however, does not make the loss a bit more tolerable. "The sense of loss to England in the death of all these young men must surely obliterate all the old romantic nonsense about war for several decades at least." Will it? Men's memories are short. Mr. Haynes realises this, and in 'All Souls' Day' casts doubt upon his own assertion. "We fear that, even after all this present sacrifice, this will probably not be the last European war. But we can no more escape facing the cataclysm than men whose homes have vanished in an earthquake can avoid making new homes." The apprehension is as just as the image is happy. Mr. Haynes is of Balliol, and will probably share our perplexity in recording the fact that Cambridge has paid more dearly in this war than Oxford.

We cannot agree with Mr. Haynes that it is no part of the historian's function to moralise, but merely to



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relate. We love the moralising of the historian, as of the novelist, and most when we differ from him. History would be dull indeed, if the historian did not fairly lay his mind to ours: and we count ourselves equal to discounting the bias of his party. Though "the Whig dogs" have the best of it, in liveliness and literature, we prefer Macaulay and Chesterton to Hallam and Stubbs.

In "Teutons and Latins" Mr. Haynes expresses his irritation, with which we sympathize, against the marked Teutonic influence on our literature and manners exercised by Coleridge, Carlyle, Meredith, and, he might have added, Matthew Arnold and George Eliot. Fortunately, indeed, "the strong, silent man" has declined since the early nineties. But we think the fears of Mr. Haynes that "there is a considerable danger of all this Teutonic nonsense becoming more virulent than ever after the war" are quite groundless. There is more danger of an equally irrational anti-Teutonic nonsense: for all these hatreds are provincial, and (though we are no internationalists), retarding, as Matthew Arnold would put it.

The final essay on 'Continental England' is on the whole the one with which we have the warmest sympathy. "Let us hope we shall like it. Some of us may then hanker for pre-war England, with all her ramshackle associations of liberty, disorganization, granite, confectionery, dirty taverns, free trade, and sentimental insularity." We shall be among the number. "Our politicians will be to us no more than a French Deputy is to a Frenchman," that is, nothing at all. The glory of the House of Commons has departed. The old order has always changed very slowly in England. "Now we are to have 'a quick change.'" All our young men have been either bureaucrats or soldiers. They will be less tolerant of amiable incompetence. They will have more of what was vilely christened 'push and go.' They will be inclined to do away with contemplative indolence. They will not put up with individual eccentricities. There may be much worse tendencies. The use of the 'nark' both in khaki and mufti may become normal to our police as it never was before. Already our railway officials treat travellers like cattle. . . . Perhaps we shall be better off: but we shall lose a good deal. There has always been a certain mystical geniality in English life—perhaps better expressed by Dickens than by any other English writer. There has always been a pleasant eccentricity among us of the sort that we find in the autobiographies of John Stuart Mill and Herbert Spencer as well as in the *Pickwick Papers*. There has been a devil-may-care happy-go-luckiness which one can remember in old boatmen and innkeepers and farmers. Instead of all this, we shall have alertness, and efficiency, and caution. The national character will change—perhaps radically—and we shall become more intelligent and less amiable." Suppose this horrible picture of the change that awaits us should be true! We feel a kind of goose-skin creep over us as we reflect that much of it may be true. There is nothing left but to induce the terrible young man of post-war England to legalise Trollope's "Fixed Period," and to allow us to pass at the Psalmist's age into a lethal chamber; a privilege we would eagerly embrace on the condition that during the few years that remain to us we may never hear the word efficiency.

EMPIRE AND LIBERTY.

Nationality and Government. By Alfred E. Zimmern. Chatto and Windus. 10s. 6d. net.

MR. Zimmern describes his book as a collection of war-time essays, and it is true that if problems of nationality and government were not brought into existence by the war they have been greatly changed on account of it. Questions of nationality in the Near East, for example, troubled the world while Italy was fighting for her nationality, but nowadays the nationality and statehood of the Balkan peoples is one of the direct issues of the war itself. Then the possi-

bility of a true, real and direct government of nearly the whole world is raised as an issue by the proposals, projects, or visions for what is known as a League of Nations. This is a conception which includes not only all the old problems of government, but others unknown which we can anticipate in thought, but for which we are entirely without guidance in experience. The uncertainty and opportunism of speculation on such subjects needs no better illustration than the essays in this book.

Since Mr. Zimmern wrote the essay on the League of Nations he has been converted from the scepticism of that essay, and his preface becomes a confession of faith. One cannot better describe his first attitude towards this new form of internationalisation than in his own words from the preface. "It seemed to me, therefore," he says, "wiser, as well as franker, to lay stress on the necessity of consolidating the constitutional fabric of the greatest existing system of international government" (Mr. Zimmern means, by this, the British Empire) "and to interpret its underlying ideals, rather than to follow the easier course of pointing out the desirability of building up a still more comprehensive system out of seemingly unpromising materials."

The compliment to the British Empire is handsome; but the compliment in the preface to the American ideal of the League of Nations is still handsomer. Mr. Zimmern says: "To-day, thanks to the policy of President Wilson, the whole outlook is changed. The great schism between the Eastern and Western Hemispheres, which future historians will rank with the schism between the Eastern and Western Churches, has been bridged over once and for all. Now that all the leading progressive States have recognized by their actions that in the modern world a man's duty to his neighbour carries with it world-wide obligations, it is possible to look forward with confidence, not merely to the final extinction of the idea of world domination by a single military Power, but to the inauguration of a new international order." Yet even in this more optimistic mood Mr. Zimmern remains conscious of the constitutional difficulties, though now he would throw the greater emphasis on the constructive side of the argument. A league of nations does not make a federal government of nations, and mere co-operation between independent authorities would be a poor and ineffective makeshift.

Two main ideas run through the whole of these essays on nationality of government: the value of nationhood as an educative, moral, and intellectual influence on the individual citizen; and the lowering of the individual character by loss of pride in nationality—that is, by nationalization. But Mr. Zimmern's views on independent small nations are the reverse of those that have long been orthodox in Liberal quarters. Against Mill he sets off Lord Acton, and dwells on the pernicious consequences of a narrow and extreme nationalism such as is rampant in the Balkan States, or which leads to the forcible Germanization of the Slavs in the German Empire. It is one aim of the war that each nation of Balkan Slavs shall acquire statehood as the expansion of their nationality; but Mr. Zimmern is the reverse of enthusiastic for this object; and he regards it as an unfortunate necessity of their history rather than as desirable for itself.

On the other hand, the vice of internationalism is decadence and the complete eclipse of personality, "ending in a type of character and social life which good Conservatives instinctively detest, but have seldom sufficient patience to describe."

Mr. Zimmern adds that: "Fortunately we possess in Sir Mark Sykes a political writer who has the gift of clothing his aversions in picturesque descriptive writing, and in his books on the Near East English readers can find some of the best examples of the spiritual degradation which befalls men who have pursued 'progress' and cosmopolitanism, and lost contact with their own national spiritual heritage."

In this balancing between the vices of nationalism in excess and of internationalism without nationhood, it

is at times difficult to understand exactly what Mr. Zimmern's proposals politically might be. In all the essays there is plenty of information illustrative of the topics in question, but the impression left often is that we have been listening to unexceptionable lessons in social morality, but are not put in a much better position for drawing political conclusions. For instance, Mr. Zimmern says in one lecture: "I have tried to make clear to you that the road to internationalism lies through nationalism, not through levelling men down to grey indistinctive cosmopolitanism, but by appealing to the best elements in the corporate inheritance of each nation. A good world means a world of good men and women. A good international world means a world of nations living at their best. The tragedy of international intercourse to-day is that the contact between nations too often takes place on the lower levels and from material motives."

One thing only we are quite sure of (apart from the essential vice of internationalism); that in Mr. Zimmern's view the small independent nation, as such, is not particularly desirable. Better for such nations to be part of a larger whole where each nation is allowed the free development and expression of its national character and tradition. Let an Empire State be sufficiently wise so to treat its national parts, and the separate nations will lose nothing by not possessing independent political statehood of their own. On the whole, no political community in the world approaches this ideal more nearly than the British Empire. We saw that until Mr. Zimmern was converted by President Wilson the British Empire was in his view the closest approximation to the ideal of the League of Nations which existed, or could exist in the actual state of the world, and that in the meantime the best hope of progress lay in adopting and extending its methods.

From this point of view Mr. Zimmern sees something hopeful even for the Balkan States, which otherwise would present a problem of desperation. He says: "The Austro-Hungarian monarchy has finally, as was inevitable under the system of 1867, linked its fate with that of its German masters; but the alternative to the dual monarchy is no longer, as it long appeared to be, the formation of a number of independent and self-regarding National States. The conference of representatives of oppressed nationalities, held in Rome in April, 1918, is one of the most epoch-making events of the war. It marks the solemn and definite recognition of common ideals, and a common policy, by the Poles, the Czecho-Slovaks, the Jugoslavs, and the Roumanians; and it is the herald of a new and happier era in which, however much greater the difficulties confronting them, the dwellers in the region between the Baltic and the Mediterranean will evolve for themselves institutions comparable to those enjoyed in North America by the equally mixed races dwelling between the Atlantic and the Pacific."

Mr. Zimmern, as we have said, writes his preface in a more sanguine mood for the settlement of Europe on the basis of national states in the political union of an international league.

But the double attitude embarrasses the reviewer. We count it for a merit, however, that while much of Mr. Zimmern's book is rather in the tone of didactic moral disquisition than of definite political argument; he spares us the irksome task of pondering upon plans for founding groups of States on the basis of nationality. This is nothing more than a hobby of certain enthusiasts.

And if such essays as 'The Universities and Public Opinion,' 'Progress in Industry,' 'The Labour Movement,' and 'The Future of British Industry,' or 'The Control of Industry After the War,' seem to have only a remote connection with the topic of nationality and government in a strictly defined sense, they make up a very interesting and instructive volume of discursive reading. One need not wait for the volume which Mr. Zimmern says he would have preferred to write, in which he would have worked out the material in a "more close-knit and satisfactory form." The material is too diverse for an effort of that kind to be successful.

MODERN POETRY: BY W.B.

"Goblins and Pagodas." By John Gould Fletcher. Constable, 5s.

"The Tree of Life." By John Gould Fletcher. Chatto & Windus, 5s.

THE root of modern experiment in poetry is an effort to bring colour into its rightful position in literature, to make of it no mere realisation of a concrete object but a living impulse, an integral part of emotion itself and, among contemporary writers, no poet is more interested in this development of the power and possibilities of words than John Gould Fletcher.

'Goblins and Pagodas' is a volume of experiments, a definite attempt to express emotion in the terms of the certain colour Mr. Fletcher believes inseparable from each mood. It is full of his sensitiveness to outward impression, the form of clouds, the light about a city, woods, the curves of the sea.

In 'Ghosts of an Old House,' the first section of the book, the poet re-builds in words the house, the trees, all the eagerly remembered associations stamped so sharply on his mind in childhood, until the old toys, the blue reflected curtain that could not be lifted, become no inanimate and careless background, but the very soul of his mood. Here is one of the shorter poems:—

OLD NURSERY.

In the tired face of the mirror
There is a blue curtain reflected.
If I could lift the reflection,
Peer a little beyond, I would see
A boy crying
Because his sister is ill in another room
And he has no one to play with;
A boy listlessly scattering building blocks,
And crying,
Because no one will build for him the palace of
Fairy Morgana.
I cannot lift the curtain:
It is stiff and frozen.

The old nursery, the sudden loneliness and longing so native to imaginative childhood, the mature consciousness not only of its loss, but that, regained, it could be but as a period stripped of life, it is all in these few words.

'Ghosts of an Old House' is followed by eleven symphonies, of which in some, particularly the 'Orange Symphony,' words elude his restraining hand, tyrannise his thought, and plunge away in a confused riot of cloudy beautiful phrases which print no clear impression on the memory. They are the poems of a writer so burdened with richness he has not troubled to sift the colours he has flung so carelessly on paper. But others, the 'Green Symphony,' the 'Blue Symphony,' 'Solitude in the City,' are as beautiful as anything Mr. Fletcher has written, full of experiment and his fresh originality of expression.

But here are some fragments from the 'Green Symphony,' wrong as it is to mar the poem by quotation of separate verses:—

"The wind runs laughing up the slope
Stripping off handfuls of wet green leaves,
To fling in people's faces.
Wallowing on the daisy-powdered turf
Clutching at the sunlight,
Cavorting in the shadow.

"Like baroque pearls,
Like cloudy emeralds,
The clouds and trees clash together;
Whirling and swirling,
In the tumult
Of the spring,
And the wind."

And here is loveliness:—

"In the tower of the winds,
All the bells are set adrift:
Jingling
For the dawn."

All the poem is as full as these verses of the wild movement, the swift curves, the shadows of the woods, sifted with sunlight, united in a single mood, green leaves, green sky, white clouds and a sense of green in the air.

But Mr. Fletcher does not confine himself to the visible beauty of the forest, even the city puts on the hues of the woodland for his eyes. He, himself, has obscured the loveliness of 'Solitude in the City' (symphony in black and gold) by his poem, recently printed in America, 'London: A War Nocturne,' perhaps the most perfect realisation of the spirit and the outward semblance of a city written in modern times. Yet 'Words at Midnight' has an elusive sadness about it that is essentially a mood of the city, not of solitude in remote places; and how he has captured the thin rain dripping from the lamps at night in these few lines:—

"O the rain of the evening is an infinite thing,
As it shivers to jewel-heaps spilt on the pavement.
The façades frown gloomily at its beauty.
The façades are dreaming of the day."

'Goblins and Pagodas' is the work of a painter building a fanciful world out of his own imagination linked with reality; 'The Tree of Life' is a leap forward, sudden and vivid as the poet's own "tiger-striped clouds." Words lose themselves no longer in a too exultant richness, but unite, willingly obedient, to Mr. Fletcher's thought. Emotion expressed in the terms of sea and sky, there is a sense of depth behind it his previous volumes have sometimes lacked. These poems would need days of intimate reading before it were possible to attempt any adequate analysis of their beauty. To read them once is to be oppressed by their loveliness, to watch impression grow confused with impression with the turning of the pages.

But certain lines, certain phrases, remain stamped on the memory and will not be obscured. Such are 'The Walk in the Garden,' 'The Astor Flower,' and 'On the Beach.' Here is one verse from a poem that has all wildness in it.

"It is only in the open air
That our love can be given to us:
We must be free each instant,
And over our heads see the sky.
The roystering cry of the vagabond wind
Wakens the gipsy song in our hearts,
The sun on the black horizon
Is the camp fire at which we may sleep."

There is 'The Empty House,' a curious, vivid picture of a mood of utter loneliness.

"There is no one at all at home.
Only the grating cry of a lock,
And the wind skurrying and sidling near,
Only the intimate eager oppression
Of some one wanting to speak to me."

There is 'The Offering' and 'Memory,' 'The Walk on the Beach,' with the desolation of that one line

"Winter shall spill upon us soon its dark cruse
laden with rain."

But Book III is perhaps the most interesting section of the volume, 'The Tree of Life' and 'The Empty Days,' both full of the weariness that lies between first and later achievement, as well as of the thought actually expressed in the poems.

It is the substance of thought rather than thought itself that is fashioned in the beautiful rhythms of these lines, yet it is the poet's imagination which startles, illuminates his entire work. Other writers are prisoner to some thought, some emotion, and then associate it

with beauty, with some remembered loveliness. Mr. Fletcher reversed this. He sees the world, feels all emotion first as colour, irregularly shaped as cloud, sonorous as water, bitterly shrill as wind, and only at the end, withdrawn as quietly as the moon from white, untroubled stillness, the thought which is the life of the poem slips carelessly into view.

Perhaps the most arresting quality of Mr. Fletcher's work is its absolute modernity; not the transience of modernity that is old even with the reading, but a breath hovering on the lips of the future fallen upon the present by mistake. It is impossible to imagine these books being written in any previous age. Yet their freshness is rooted in the earth of past learning and there is no crudeness about them, but a very definite strength. Poet of colour, poet of experiment, the dominant impression left by these two volumes is of work that must possess vital influence in the development of English poetry.

[We publish this review because we wish to give "the Moderns" a chance of explaining their poetry in "modern" English. But editorially there is only one sentence with which we agree, viz.: "it is impossible to imagine these books being written in any previous age."—ED. S.R.].

OUR LIBRARY TABLE.

'The Lausiac History of Palladius,' translated with an introduction and notes by W. K. Lowther Clarke (S.P.C.K. 5s. net), is not only a document of the highest value to hagiographers and church historians, dating as it does from the end of the fourth century, and describing the monastic life of the Thebaid, but a treasure of perfectly enchanting anecdote, comparable to Anatole France at his best, without, of course, his native Voltairian cynicism. The text is founded on Abbot Butler's masterly reconstruction of the original. In its religious aspect the reader will enter into the purest side of the attractions and rewards of the solitary life. It is a notable addition to devotional literature.

'The Letters and Treatises of St. Dionysius of Alexandria,' translated with an introduction and notes by C. L. Feltoe (S.P.C.K., 3s. 6d. net), from the Greek text published in 1904 by him, is especially valuable for its contemporary accounts of the Decian and Valerian persecutions and for the light it throws on the origins of Arianism. The extract of his work "on Nature" is interesting, as showing the popular view of the Epicurean philosophy. St. Dionysius, who died Bishop of Alexandria in 265, was at one time confused with St. Dionysius the Areopagite and St. Denis of France.

'The Sibylline Oracles, Books III—V,' translated with an introduction and notes by H. N. Bate (S.P.C.K., 3s. 6d. net). The 'Oracula Sybillina' now extant consists of twelve books numbered I—VIII and XI—XIV. Of these I and II are Jewish, II—V are the earliest of all and are mainly Egyptian, VI—VIII are of the second century, XI—XIII of the third, and XIV of the fourth. They were treated by Christian apologists and heathen writers alike as genuine productions of the Sybils and are works of first importance for the study of the Apocalyptic atmosphere. The editor supplies us with a most lucid account of them in his introduction, and his notes elucidate most of the difficulties that occur in the text, or give us the conjectures of modern critics. The series of which it forms part 'Translations of Early Documents' is under the general editorship of Dr. Oesterley and Canon Box.

'Eastern Exploration, Past and Future,' by W. M. Flinders Petrie (Constable, 2s. 6d. net), is a reprint of a course of lectures at the Royal Institution describing the archaeological treasures of Palestine and Mesopotamia, indicating future fields of work, and insisting on the absolute necessity of the English Government forming some plan of dealing with them in order to prevent the senseless ravages of amateur excavators and professional curiosity hunters. Those of us who have talked with men back from the Salonika front know how much has been lost even in that small field, but casual destruction in Palestine or Mesopotamia will destroy all chance of our ever learning the early history of the earliest civilizations of the world. It is to be hoped that Professor Petrie's warnings may penetrate to those in power. In the meantime we may assure the general reader that this small volume contains a fascinating account of what is known of the early history of these two great centres of early culture.



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MOTOR NOTES.

A beginner recently informed us that he had sold his big car and purchased one of more moderate horse-power, and on enquiring into the facts we found that his action was due to accidents which occurred when actually learning. In one case, when running into his motor house, he put down the accelerator pedal instead of applying the brake, and so rammed the stern of his own motor boat. Immediately afterwards he carried out the same manoeuvre in connection with a tramcar. Fortunately it was the rear end, and little damage was done. We know that many accidents have been caused by beginners who had no previous experience, being suddenly called upon to control a big horse-power car. The mere size of the vehicle, and the feeling of having to manage such a powerful engine, cause a sense of nervousness, and the driver is apt to lose his head. The beginner should get his first lessons on a small car of moderate horse-power, and when he has gained self-confidence, the lessons should be continued on a more ambitious model.

Only Two Feet

Many of the accidents which occur are due to the very natural mistake being made of operating the accelerator pedal instead of the brake. The possibility of an experienced driver making such a mistake is very remote. In the case of the beginner or nervous driver, it is in reality, a very possible one to fall into. With three pedals and only two feet, an over anxious and inexperienced driver may, in an emergency, press the wrong pedal with disastrous results.

All cars, we think, should be fitted with a control lever on the steering wheel in addition to the accelerator pedal, and this control lever should be so designed that it could be operated by a finger or thumb while the driver's hands rest on the steering wheel. A frictional arrangement for securing it in position is much better

than any ratchet device. The latter offers so much opposition to the smooth and gradual movement of the lever that it is difficult to drive comfortably by its aid, and as a result, one is likely to rely altogether upon the accelerator. To work a foot accelerator properly requires experience. The position is uncomfortable at first, because, unlike the case of the other pedals, the slightest pressure will operate the accelerator, and consequently the driver has to rest the foot nearly altogether on the heel, and in his novitiate finds a difficulty in keeping it steady, every road shock giving it a certain amount of movement. When one is travelling fast, a slight variation of this nature is not of much consequence, but when moving slowly it is necessary that the torque should be as even as possible. The delicacy of the movement required to control the engine revolutions to the correct limit is by no means as easy as the expert thinks.

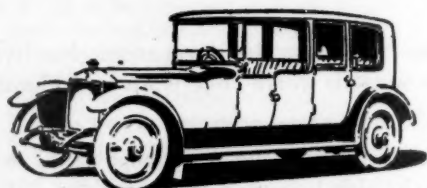
With a properly arranged control lever on the steering wheel, one can gauge the power required minutely, and can enter a garage or creep through traffic without the slightest difficulty. With one foot on the clutch pedal and the other on the brake, the driver is prepared for every emergency, and on an open road the right foot is at once available to operate the accelerator pedal to the required degree, but where the driving is slow and tricky there is nothing to beat the hand lever. The two in combination afford ideal control.

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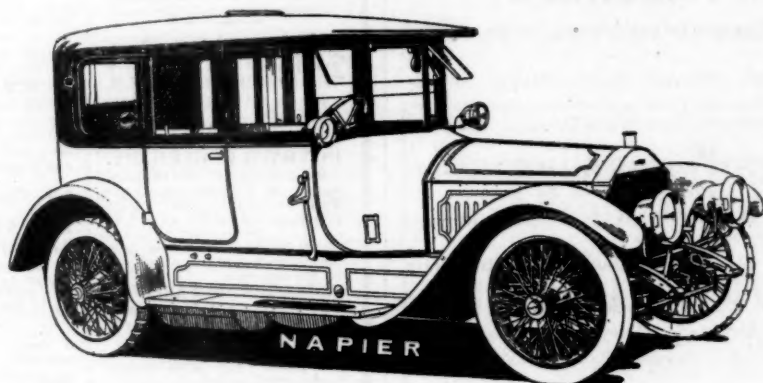
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Vol. XX of 'Nelson's History of the War' (Nelson, 2s. 6d. net) deals with the third battle of Ypres and the Russian downfall. It is, as usual, profusely illustrated with maps, and an appendix gives Sir Douglas Haig's account of the battle in his fourth despatch, the Vatican note and President Wilson's reply, and a table of events from July, 1916, to July, 1917. The History is proving itself more and more invaluable.

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At the close of the present year the liabilities of several well-known life offices will have to be ascertained, in order to comply with the provisions of the Assurance Companies Act, 1909, with regard to quinquennial valuations. Among their number is the Scottish Provident Institution, which has accumulated over sixteen millions in funds, and will consequently have to write off a considerable sum in respect of depreciated assets. How much can only be conjectured, but the more recent annual accounts show that an investment reserve fund of £400,000 exists, and that £135,000 was written off certain investments at the end of last year. Provision for depreciation had therefore been made to the extent of £535,000—a very substantial sum; and it must further be remembered that only a part of the life funds are liable to the effects of war depreciation. Out of assets amounting to £16,790,997 on 31 December, 1917, £3,702,649 had been invested on the security of mortgages at home and abroad; £2,903,861 was on loan and £3,225,323 was in recently-acquired British Government securities, which are not likely to be much below par on the date of investigation. These three amounts alone account for £9,831,833, and the balance-sheet further shows that £564,274 was held in the form of house property, £20,972 in freehold ground rents and feu duties, £54,721 in reversions, £45,514 in cash, and £244,625 in the form of office furniture and interest, and premiums still to be received.

In this case it is possible to take a fairly hopeful view of the forthcoming valuation, as less than 6½ million pounds was then subject to serious depreciation, and considerable further investments in British and Allied war stocks have since been made. Apart from these securities, which are now held to the extent of, say, one-third of the total funds, the amount actually involved is probably not more than ten times that of the reserve fund, in which case provision would already have been made for a 10 per cent. all-round decline from 1913 Stock Exchange prices.

That the results of the valuation will be disappointing compared with those reported at the end of previous quinquenniums, goes without saying, and it is quite possible that the distribution of realized profits may be deferred. Up to the end of 1917 the institution had been called upon to pay nearly £400,000 in respect of war claims, most of the assurances so cancelled being on young lives. The net loss through excess mortality was doubtless smaller, but not to any great extent, as no extra premiums were paid by civilian members called to the colours, and only trivial reserves had been accumulated in the case of most of the policies. Both in 1916 and 1917, as a matter of fact, no profit was realized from suspended mortality, and it is questionable whether any profit will be made this year. In the two previous years, however, the Society did fairly well, total claims, compared with the "expectation," being only 79 per cent. in 1914 and 86 per cent. in 1915. For the full term a mortality profit of some importance may, therefore, be expected, and it is obvious that the surplus will be enriched by further substantial sums resulting from economic administration and excess interest earned above the valuation rate. Expenses absorbed only 14.1 per cent. of the premium income in 1914, when valuation charges had to be met; 12.7 per cent. in 1915, and 12.9 per cent. and 12.4 per cent. in each of the last two years. These percentages are exceptionally moderate in view of the low premiums charged by the institution, and they show a wide difference when compared with the proportion of the office premiums reserved for expenses and profits.

In the matter of interest on investments an examination of the accounts for four years shows that the rates assumed for valuation purposes at the end of 1913 have substantially been exceeded. A satisfactory surplus on 31st December next may therefore be said to be assured, even without taking into account the actuarial effect of the large increase obtained in the case of the renewal premium income.

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THE CITY.

A valuable contribution to the discussion of the declining gold production and the desirability of stimulating the output of the British Empire, is contained in a pamphlet written by Mr. H. Strakosch, managing director of the Union Corporation. He argues that in so far as the amount of gold contained in our currency and credit reserve affects money rates and foreign exchanges, so will it be to the advantage of the nation to increase its gold supplies. But in the last two years the gold production of the Empire has fallen 15 per cent. and that of the world 14 per cent. and this decline, which is accelerating, will continue unless some measure of relief is granted to the industry to offset increased working costs. To raise the standard price of gold would create world-wide confusion and defeat its object by causing a rise in the cost of all commodities and services including those used by gold mines. On the other hand it is quite certain that companies will not work ore that does not pay, which means that mines containing low grade ore only must stop working (two more stoppages on the Rand have been announced this week), and other mines must discard their low grade ore and work only that which is payable at the increased cost. The effect will be a further decline in output at a time when it is vitally important that the gold reserve of the country should be steadily increased. (The Currency Committee's report issued last week recommended the accumulation of a reserve of 150 millions.)

To stimulate production some incentive is required and it must be sufficient in amount and in duration to encourage the reopening of low grade mines that have been shut down and the working on other mines of low grade ores at present ignored. Mr. Strakosch suggests a bounty per ounce of gold produced in the British Empire for 10 or 15 years after peace and for purposes of illustration he assumes a bounty of 12s. 6d. per fine ounce, which would be equivalent to about 4s. per ton of Rand ore milled, or roughly equal to the increase in working costs since July, 1914. On a basis of the Empire's 1917 production of 13,200,000 ounces, this would cost the nation £8,250,000. The writer then shows that such an expenditure as this would be insignificant in comparison with the national benefits derivable from a sustained increase in gold production. If the enlarged flow of gold into the central reserve resulted in a reduction of only $\frac{1}{4}$ per cent. in the rate of interest at which the Government will be able to fund the unfunded debt, the expenditure mentioned will have paid for itself. In other words, taking the unfunded at the modest total of £6,500,000,000, and the interest rate at 5 per cent. it is clear that if the credit and currency situation has so far improved as to enable the Government to fund that debt at 4 per cent., there will be an annual saving of £65,000,000 in interest. In the past the flow of gold into the Bank has unquestionably served to reduce money rates and if the suggested bounty on gold contributed only to the extent of $\frac{1}{4}$ per cent., in reducing the interest on the unfunded debt it would save the nation at least £8,125,000 a year. And that would be only one of the national benefits derived. Applying the similar arguments to the foreign exchange situation and assuming that for some years after the war we shall have to face an adverse trade balance of £150,000,000 annually, the expenditure of £8,250,000 per annum will pay for itself if it does no more than improve the value of the sterling exchanges by a mere $5\frac{1}{2}$ per cent. The cumulative effect of these influences upon national credit and upon trade and commerce, is beyond estimation.

The word "bounty" is objectionable to many, and a bounty on gold would be particularly execrable to them; but, call it what you will, this suggested bounty seems to provide one panacea to the evil of declining gold output and it should receive very earnest consideration before anathema is pronounced. It is one of the suggestions which must come before the Gold Production Committee which consists of Lord Inchcape, Sir Thomas Elliott, Sir Charles Addis and Mr. W. H. Goschen.

MOLASSINE COMPANY.

FAVOURABLE RESULTS FROM SALE OF "RITO."

THE ELEVENTH ANNUAL MEETING of the Molassine Company, Limited, was held November 1st, at the registered offices, Tunnel Avenue, East Greenwich, Mr. John Prosser (managing director), presiding.

Mr. E. C. Puplett, A.C.I.S. (joint secretary), having read the notice convening the meeting and the auditor's report.

The Chairman said: Gentlemen,—I am sorry that our Chairman is not able to be with us to-day, as he is not very well, and we thought it best that he should have a rest. You have already had a copy of the report and balance sheet for the year ended 31 March last. As you will have seen, it shows a profit of £21,417 15s. 4d., which, with £580 2s. 7d. brought forward from the previous year, makes a total of £21,997 17s. 11d. One year's dividend has been paid on the preference shares, amounting to £7,000, and we propose to deal with the balance by writing the sum of £10,142 19s. 3d. off the goodwill account standing as an asset in the balance sheet under the heading of "dog biscuit development account." We deem this advisable in consequence of the business having suffered owing to the war. I do not know that much need be said about the balance sheet. The share capital, of course, remains the same. We have redeemed debenture stock to the amount of £3,000. The sundry creditors are £25,263 11s. 8d. in excess of last year's figure. This is accounted for by the greatly increased cost of some of the raw materials. The credit side of the balance sheet shows very little change, except that investments and shares in other companies have been reduced from £5,308 to £207. Full value was obtained for what was realised. The sundry debtors are £16,198 19s. 1d. more than they were last year. This, of course, is a variable item, and is all quite good. The stock shows an increase of £23,643 18s. 7d. This is chiefly the result of the higher cost of material. On the whole, the year has been a satisfactory one. Reference was made at our last annual meeting to the prospects of good results from the sale of Rito, the new food for soil bacteria. Our expectations have been more than realised. We have had a very busy season with this article, and have a large number of splendid reports from users in all parts of the country.

GOVERNMENT RESTRICTIONS.

It is to be regretted that molasses, which forms such a large portion of the raw material used by this company, has been required chiefly for national purposes, and this has consequently interfered with the output of Molassine meal. As to the future in this respect, it is difficult to say much. We naturally hope that when hostilities cease this article will occupy its former place as a food for cattle when manufactured into Molassine meal. In Rito also there is a large business to be done. Unfortunately, for the time being we are selling only the horticultural quality, as, on account of a recent Order issued by the Ministry of Munitions for the control of some of the ingredients used, it is impossible to sell large quantities of agricultural Rito to farmers. Again, we can only hope that in a very short time all these restrictions will be unnecessary and we shall be free to trade once more in the good old English way, unmolested and undisturbed by all sorts of regulations, some of which may be necessary, but a good many of which are doubtful and only interfere with enterprise and initiative. Like all other firms, we have had to see our men join the Forces one after the other until very few are left: 130 of our employees are serving the country at present, and 15 have made the supreme sacrifice. We have contributed to the relatives of all those who are serving. I now beg to move the adoption of the report and balance-sheet as presented.

Mr. Robert Allen seconded the resolution.

DIRECTORS' FINANCIAL POLICY.

Mr. Howard said he was very pleased to see that the company had made progress during the past year, in spite of restrictions put upon them. Notwithstanding these, the profit was up by some £4,000. As representing a preference shareholder, he regretted that the directors should have thought it right to have wiped off the whole of the £10,142, the amount of the good-will standing in the balance-sheet as "Dog biscuit development account," seeing that there were arrears of preference dividend still outstanding. He assumed that the main reason for such a course was that the company required the money for future requirements.

The Chairman, in reply, said that the directors had seriously discussed what was the right thing to do, and, in view of the increased cost of raw material, they thought it best to keep the money in the business, inasmuch as financing in these days was a serious matter. The directors themselves were large shareholders, and sympathised with the preference shareholders.

The resolution was carried unanimously.

Mr. W. J. Alcock proposed, and Mr. H. Goodman seconded, the re-election of Mr. Stanley W. Goodman as a director, which was unanimously agreed to.

On the motion of Mr. R. Allen, seconded by Mr. H. Goodman, the appointment of Mr. Peter Slingsby and Mr. W. J. Alcock as directors was confirmed.

The auditors, Messrs. Cooper Brothers & Co., were reappointed, and a vote of thanks having been accorded to the Chairman and directors, as well as to the staff, the proceedings terminated.

A. & C. BLACK'S Autumn List, 1918.

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